

Appendix N

Public Meeting Summary Reports



ALAMO RMA

Alamo Regional Mobility Authority

"Moving people faster"

Final Meeting Report

US 281 Environmental Impact Statement Public Scoping Meeting #2

Prepared for the Federal Highway Administration

San Antonio, Texas
November 17, 2009

Table of Contents

| <u>Section</u> | <u>Page</u> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.0 Introduction | 3 |
| 1.1. Meeting Purpose and Overview | 4 |
| 1.2. Outreach Methods | 4 |
| 1.3. Attendance | 5 |
| 2.0 Meeting Format | 5 |
| 3.0 Public Comments | 13 |
| 3.1. Comments Received by the Alamo RMA from Elected/ Local Officials | 13 |
| 3.2. Comments Received by the Alamo RMA from the Public | 13 |
| 3.3. Meeting Evaluations Received by the Alamo RMA | 14 |
| 3.4. Summary of Major Comments/ Issues Addressed | 15 |
| 3.5. Recommendation | 15 |
| 4.0 Record of Comments Received by the Alamo RMA | 17 |
| 5.0 Official Response to Comments | 54 |
| 5.1. General Comments and Responses | 54 |
| 5.2. Specific Comment Responses | 72 |
| 6.0 Next Steps | 84 |
| 6.1. Meeting Report Posting and Notification of Comments Receiving a Response | 84 |

List of Tables

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Table 1. Should these Alternatives be Carried Forward for Level 2 Screening? | 7 |
| Table 2. Should these Alternatives be Eliminated from Further Screening? | 8 |
| Table 3. Compiled Results from All Small Groups of the Purpose and Objectives Worksheet .. | 10 |
| Table 4. Compiled Results from All Small Groups for the Purpose and Alternatives Worksheet | 12 |
| Table 5. Meeting Evaluation Form Results | 14 |
| Table 6. Comment and Response Record | 18 |
| Table 7. Peak Hour Traffic Flow Characteristics | 62 |
| Table 8. History of US 281 Environmental Documentation | 68 |
| Table 9. US 281 EIS Cooperating and Participating Agencies | 81 |

List of Appendices

| |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Appendix A – Legal Notices and Other Methods of Meeting Advertisement |
| Appendix B – Sign-In Sheets |
| Appendix C – Meeting Handouts, Exhibits and Slide Presentations |
| Appendix D – Photos |
| Appendix E – Master Comment Listing |
| Appendix F – Written Public Comments and Meeting Evaluation Forms |
| Appendix G – Court Reporter Transcript of Verbal Comments |

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Alamo Regional Mobility Authority (Alamo RMA) conducted Public Scoping Meeting #2 in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Section 6002 requirements for the US 281 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being prepared for the location on US 281 from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive in Bexar County. The Public Scoping Meeting was held on November 17, 2009 from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm at Spring Hill Event Center, 2455 Celebration Drive, San Antonio, Texas.

The EIS is being developed for an approximately eight mile segment located entirely within Bexar County, as shown in **Figure 1**.

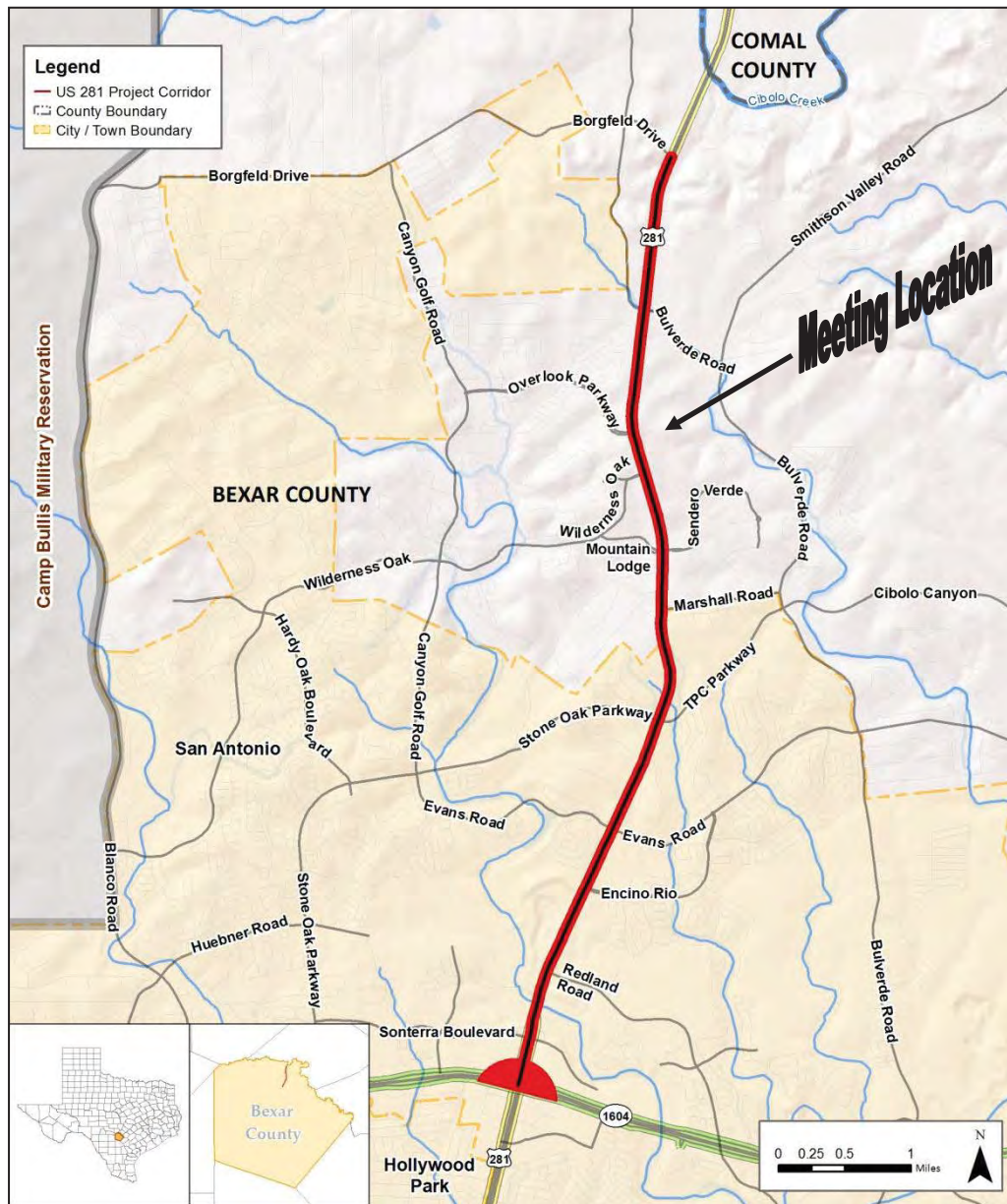


Figure 1 - Project Location Map

1.1. Meeting Purpose and Overview

The purpose of this meeting was to:

- further define the need and purpose for improvements to US 281
- refine the range of alternatives for improvements to US 281
- develop the alternatives evaluation and screening method
- inform attendees of the next steps in the EIS process
- create a record of public views and participation in this project, as required by the NEPA.

Upon arrival at the sign-in tables, attendees were given an overview packet outlining the major themes that would be presented and discussed during Public Scoping Meeting #2. Media representatives were invited at 4:00 p.m. for a preview of the presentation slides and exhibits. The meeting was conducted in an open house format from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., followed by a formal presentation from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and concluded with small group work session from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Throughout the meeting, the US 281 EIS team and Alamo RMA representatives were available to answer questions and provide information.

An Agency Scoping Meeting was held the same day at 2:00 p.m. prior to the public scoping meeting. All cooperating and participating agencies were invited to attend. Representatives from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the Alamo RMA and VIA Metropolitan Transit (VIA) participated in this meeting. One comment was received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regarding some potential areas of concern that should be addressed in the EIS on November 25, 2009. Another comment was received from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality indicating that General Conformity does not apply to the proposed project due to San Antonio's attainment of all National Ambient Air Quality Standards as of December 2, 2009. Both comments are included in **Appendix F** and will be addressed in the EIS.

1.2. Outreach Methods

To ensure a wider audience was informed of the meeting, and in compliance with FHWA and TxDOT regulations, legal notices in English and Spanish were placed within daily newspapers within Bexar County. All notices and articles are included in **Appendix A**.

Below is a list of meeting announcements and media coverage:

- October 18, 2009 – Legal Notice (in Spanish) in *La Prensa, Clasificados* section, page 5B
- October 18, 2009 – Legal Notice in *San Antonio Express-News*, Legal & Public Notice section, page 8E
- November 7, 2009 – Legal Notice in *San Antonio Express-News*, Legal & Public Notice section, page 3E
- November 8, 2009 – Advertisement in *Glance*, page 9
- November 8, 2009 – Legal Notice (in Spanish) in *La Prensa, Clasificados* section, page 5B
- November 8, 2009 – Advertisement (in Spanish) in *La Prensa, Clasificados* section, page 6B
- November 11, 2009 – Advertisement in *San Antonio Express-News*, page 4A
- November 11, 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *HillCountryTimes.com*
- November 11-17, 2009 – Advertisement in *San Antonio Current*, page 14
- November 11-17, 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *mySA.com*, mySA Calendar
- November 12, 2009 – Advertisement in *Bulverde News*, page 5
- November 12, 2009 – Advertisement in *North Central News*, page 5
- November 12, 2009 – Meeting Announcement Blog Post on *Get the 4-1-1 on 281*

- November 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *KENS5.com*, Events
- November 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *WOAI.com*, Community Calendar
- November 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *AmericanTowns.com*, San Antonio Events
- November 2009 – Advertisement in *Welcome Home 78259*, page 16
- November 2009 – Advertisement in *Welcome Home 78260/78261*, page 5
- November 2009 – Advertisement in *Welcome Home 78258*, page 27
- November 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *sacommunities.com*, Banner Ad
- November 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *Magic1053.com*, Event Guide
- November 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *Y100FM.com*, Events
- November 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *kissrocks.com*, Event Guide
- November 2009 – Meeting Announcement on *KONO1011.com*, Event Guide
- November 17, 2009 – Segment on WOAI News 4 San Antonio at 6:00 p.m.

The project newsletter was published in English and in Spanish and 39,093 copies were distributed both in hardcopy and electronically to adjacent property owners, transportation partners, media outlets, Community Advisory Committee members, Peer Technical Review Committee members and other interested parties on November 2, 2009. The following zip codes within and surrounding the US 281 project corridor were included in this mailing effort: 78258, 78259, 78260, and 78261 (**Appendix A**).

Letters were mailed to local, state and federal elected officials on November 5, 2009 (**Appendix A**).

The Alamo RMA managed the pre-, during and post-event media relations for this Public Scoping Meeting. A press release and Request for Coverage were sent multiple times to local media including weekly newspapers, social publications, the San Antonio News Bureau, television and AM/FM radio stations. A copy of the press release, Request for Coverage, media packet, and media list is included in **Appendix A**.

1.3. Attendance

A total of 133 people signed in for Public Scoping Meeting #2, including 85 individuals/ residents from the surrounding community, 2 representatives from the media, 5 representatives from local, county and federal agencies, and no elected officials. In addition, there were representatives present from the Alamo RMA and the US 281 EIS team, which consisted of consultants from Jacobs, Hicks & Company, Ecological Communication Corporation, Zara Environmental, SMITH/Associates, and Ximenes & Associates, Inc. The sign-in sheets are included in **Appendix B**.

2.0 MEETING FORMAT

The Public Scoping Meeting was conducted in three parts:

1. open house
2. formal presentation
3. small group work session

Copies of all exhibits from the open house, slide presentations, and meeting hand-outs are included in **Appendix C** and photos from the meeting are included in **Appendix D**.

Open House: The open house was organized into four areas or stations. Each station had US 281 EIS team members present to answer questions related to the focus of the station. During the open house a continuously looping slide presentation projected onto a large screen summarized the need and purpose for improvements to US 281 and introduced the project objectives that would be discussed further during the formal presentation and small group work session.

When attendees walked into the open house chairs were set up for the formal presentation and tables were set up for the small group work session. These areas provided space where people could sit down and write out comments. A court reporter was present during the entire meeting.

Below is a description of each of the four stations or areas at the open house:

Station 1 – Welcome – This introductory station provided project handouts, information on the meeting format and information on how the exhibits were organized in the open house as well as opportunities to provide input. As people walked in they were asked to sign-in and were given a packet of handouts. These handouts included a meeting agenda, a description of the small group work session, a comment card, and information that focused on the range of alternatives and the alternatives evaluation and screening process.



Station 2 – Background Information –

This station described the NEPA, the EIS process, project milestones and agencies involved in the US 281 EIS. It also differentiated this project from other past or on-going projects along the US 281 corridor. Additionally, it provided an overview of the need and purpose for improvements for US 281 including historic, current, and projected trends regarding growth in the corridor, safety, functionality, and quality of life. The *Citizens Guide to NEPA* and a US 281 EIS newsletter were available as handouts at this station.



Station 3 – The Alternatives Evaluation and Screening Process – This station detailed the recommended alternatives evaluation and screening process.

Station 4 – Preliminary Alternatives [Interactive] – This station detailed the range of alternatives under consideration for the US 281 corridor. A general description, operational characteristics and/or examples of each of the alternatives were presented. To demonstrate

how the evaluation and screening process would work, the preliminary alternatives were evaluated within Level 1 of this three-level process. The results of this evaluation and the rationale behind the recommendation to carry some of the alternatives forward in the process and to eliminate other alternatives for further consideration was presented at **Station 4**.

Two interactive exhibits, located at **Station 4**, provided an opportunity for meeting attendees to share their views on the results of the Level 1 evaluation.

One exhibit listed all of the alternatives that were recommended to be carried forward for evaluation in Level 2 of the three-level process. Participants were asked “Should These Alternatives be Carried Forward for Level 2 Screening?”.

Table 1. Should these Alternatives be Carried Forward for Level 2 Screening?

| Transportation Options* | Yes (Green) | No (Red) |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| No-Build | 0 | 6 |
| Light Rail | 5 | 3 |
| Streetcars | 1 | 5 |
| Fixed Route Bus | 0 | 5 |
| Express Bus | 5 | 1 |
| Bus Rapid Transit | 1 | 2 |
| Add Lanes to Existing US 281 | 10 | 4 |
| Grade Separated Intersections | 6 | 2 |
| Expand Parallel Corridors | 5 | 0 |
| Upgrade US 281 to an Expressway | 10 | 1 |
| High Occupancy Vehicles/High Occupancy Toll Lanes | 6 | 4 |
| Growth Management | 6 | 1 |
| Bike/Pedestrian Facilities | 6 | 1 |
| Transportation System Management | 3 | 2 |
| Transportation Demand Management | 3 | 3 |

** Any of these alternatives may be combined into a package of improvements*

Note: All of these alternatives apply to US 281 North of Loop 1604.

There were a total of 107 stickers placed on this interactive exhibit. The alternative that adds lanes to the existing US 281 corridor and the alternative that upgrades US 281 to an expressway received the largest percentage with 10 stickers each under the “Yes” column or 19 percent of the total stickers placed on the exhibit.

The second interactive exhibit listed the preliminary alternatives that were recommended for elimination after being evaluated in Level 1 of this process. Participants were asked, “Should

These Alternatives be Eliminated from Further Screening?” People shared their input by placing a green sticker under “yes” or placing a red sticker under “no”. The table below provides a tally and analysis of the input received.

Table 2. Should these Alternatives be Eliminated from Further Screening?

| Transportation Options* | Yes (Green) | No (Red) |
|----------------------------|-------------|----------|
| Heavy Rail | 8 | 0 |
| Commuter Rail | 7 | 0 |
| Monorail | 5 | 2 |
| Automated Guideway Transit | 5 | 0 |
| Personal Rapid Transit | 7 | 0 |
| New Parallel Corridor | 5 | 0 |

** Alternatives found to have fatal flaws*

There were a total of 39 stickers placed on this interactive exhibit. Overall, the individuals who participated in this exercise agreed with the Level 1 evaluation results that recommended that the following alternatives be eliminated from further consideration: heavy rail, commuter rail, monorail, automated guideway transit, personal rapid transit, and a new parallel corridor.

Copies of all exhibits are included in **Appendix C**.

Formal Presentation: The US 281 EIS team gave a slide presentation that detailed the suggested project objectives and the alternatives evaluation and screening process. The presentation included a detailed description of the range of alternatives presented in the open house exhibits as well as the rationale that supported the recommendations from Level 1 of the three-level decision process. The formal presentation concluded with an introduction to the small group work session. The presentation slides are included in **Appendix C** and a transcription of the presentation is included in **Appendix G**.

Small Group Work Session Overview: The participants at Public Scoping Meeting #2 were randomly divided into small groups and seated at round tables. Each group was led by a facilitator from the US 281 EIS team.

The small group work session were broken into two exercises: the first exercise focused on the recommended objectives for improvements to US 281, and the second exercise focused on preliminary alternatives being considered for US 281. This exercise began by asking the participants individually to relate the recommended objective to the proposed purpose for improvements. The group discussed their different perspectives on the need and purpose for improvements, the recommended objectives and the preliminary alternatives. After each small group had completed Part 1 and Part 2 of the work session, a volunteer shared the highlights of their small group's discussion with the larger group. The reporting out to the larger group allowed everyone to hear the various perspectives. A transcription of the small group reports are included in **Appendix G**.



Part 1 – Purpose and Objectives

Fifty-four individuals participated in Part 1 of the small group work session. This activity began with an individual exercise -- a worksheet was distributed and each person was asked to review the list of recommended objectives for the US 281 project and evaluate if each objective addressed the purposes for improving US 281. **Table 3** is a tally of results compiled from all small groups.

The purpose of this exercise was to emphasize the importance of the project need and purpose and to encourage participants to delve into the project objectives that further define the project purpose.

Table 3. Compiled Results from All Small Groups of the Purpose and Objectives Worksheet

| Objective | Purpose | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| | Address Growth | Improve Functionality | Improve Safety | Enhance Quality of Life |
| 1. Provide additional capacity to satisfy current and forecasted corridor travel demand. | 44 | 34 | 29 | 27 |
| 2. Reduce travel times and increase travel speeds for through traffic during peak travel periods. | 26 | 43 | 24 | 31 |
| 3. Create a multi-modal transportation facility that is compatible with, and connects to, the regional transportation network. | 27 | 26 | 18 | 17 |
| 4. Allow for development of high-capacity transit in the long term. | 34 | 23 | 19 | 20 |
| 5. Reduce conflicts between local access and through traffic. | 20 | 43 | 38 | 26 |
| 6. Maintain and/or improve access to adjacent land uses and cross streets. | 19 | 37 | 28 | 25 |
| 7. Promote community wellness and contribute to a healthy community through safe facilities for walking and biking. | 7 | 7 | 14 | 31 |
| 8. Reduce vehicle crash rates by providing for the safe and easy movement of motor vehicles within the corridor. | 9 | 30 | 41 | 21 |
| 9. Be consistent with local and regional plans and policies. | 23 | 25 | 12 | 14 |
| 10. Maximize use of federal, state, and local government and other non-tolled sources of funding. | 28 | 28 | 19 | 25 |
| 11. Protect the environment and avoid and/or minimize and mitigate adverse direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to social, economic and environmental resources. | 11 | 10 | 12 | 33 |
| 12. Reflect the character and values of the corridor through aesthetic treatments and landscaping acceptable to corridor neighborhoods. | 7 | 6 | 6 | 34 |
| 13. Improve air quality. | 9 | 6 | 10 | 39 |
| 14. Mitigate traffic noise. | 5 | 4 | 7 | 37 |
| 15. Enhance water quality through management of storm water runoff. | 4 | 14 | 15 | 36 |
| 16. Avoid negative impacts to threatened and endangered species and their habitat. | 6 | 2 | 4 | 30 |

Note: Participants were asked to place a checkmark in the column below each purpose they felt was addressed by that objective.

There were a total of 1,359 responses given during this exercise. Of all responses, **Objective 1**, “provide additional capacity to satisfy current and forecasted corridor travel demand”, received the greatest number of responses, at 134. **Objective 16**, “avoid negative impacts to

threatened and endangered species and their habitat” received the least number of responses, at 42. In terms of addressing the purposes, **Objective 1** was considered the best at addressing growth, and **Objective 15**, “Enhance water quality through management of storm water runoff” was considered the least effective for addressing growth. **Objective 2**, “Reduce travel times and increase travel speeds for through traffic during peak travel periods”, was considered the best at improving functionality and **Objective 16** the worst. To improve safety, respondents felt that **Objective 5**, “Reduce conflicts between local access and through traffic” was the most effective while **Objective 16** was the least effective at addressing safety. And, **Objective 13**, “improve air quality” was considered the best at addressing quality of life while **Objective 9** “be consistent with local and regional plans and policies” was the least.

After each participant completed the Part 1 worksheet individually, a focused conversation was conducted. The following questions were asked at each table to guide the discussion. A volunteer from each small group was asked to take notes during this discussion.

- What key words or phrases do you remember from the objectives?
- What objectives troubled you?
- What surprised you about the objectives?
- Which of these objectives is important to you?
- Which objectives should be added or removed from the list?

Part 2 – Purpose and Alternatives

Fifty-two individuals participated in Part 2 of the small group work session. This session also began with an individual activity. A worksheet was distributed that asked each person to review the list of alternatives recommended to be carried forward to Level 2 of the three-level decision process. The worksheet also asked each respondent to evaluate how well these alternatives addressed each of the proposed purposes for improvements to US 281. Each person was asked to rank each alternative from 1 to 5. A rank of 1 indicated the alternative does not address the purpose at all, while a rank of 5 indicated the alternative addressed the purpose of the project very well. **Table 4** reveals the results of the purpose and alternatives worksheet exercise.

The purpose of this exercise was to emphasize the importance of the project need and purpose and to encourage participants to delve into the alternatives by evaluating them against the project purposes.

Table 4. Compiled Results from All Small Groups for the Purpose and Alternatives Worksheet

| Alternative | Purpose | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----|----|----|----|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|----------------|----|----|----|----|-------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| | Address Growth | | | | | Improve Functionality | | | | | Improve Safety | | | | | Enhance Quality of Life | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No-Build | 33 | 12 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 28 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 30 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 32 | 9 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Fixed Guideway Transit (Light Rail & Street Car) | 26 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 22 | 14 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 21 | 11 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 20 | 12 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| Non-Fixed Guideway Transit (Fixed Route Bus, Express Bus, & Bus Rapid Transit) | 16 | 13 | 14 | 2 | 1 | 13 | 19 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 13 | 13 | 14 | 2 | 0 | 16 | 14 | 7 | 1 | 0 |
| Add Lanes to existing US 281 north of Loop 1604 (No Frontage Roads) | 11 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 8 | 11 | 5 | 18 | 4 | 9 | 12 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 7 | 13 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 9 |
| Grade Separated Intersections (Short Frontage Roads) | 4 | 4 | 14 | 15 | 13 | 5 | 2 | 9 | 20 | 11 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 21 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 17 | 11 |
| Expand Parallel Corridors | 6 | 8 | 14 | 7 | 12 | 5 | 12 | 11 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 12 | 12 | 6 | 10 | 6 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 9 |
| Upgrade Existing US 281 north of Loop 1604 to an Expressway (With Frontage Roads) | 0 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 34 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 31 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 31 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 31 |
| Add Additional High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) / High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes north of Loop 1604 | 21 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 20 | 4 | 11 | 6 | 1 | 20 | 9 | 9 | 2 | 2 |
| Implement Policy Changes and Growth Management | 16 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 14 | 11 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 14 | 11 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Add Facilities for Cyclists and Pedestrians | 33 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 22 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 3 |
| Integrate Transportation System Management and Incident Management | 12 | 9 | 13 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 10 | 7 | 12 | 5 | 7 | 13 | 7 | 11 | 4 | 6 |
| Incorporate Transportation Demand Management | 19 | 8 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 16 | 12 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 21 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 4 |

Note: Participants were asked to indicate with a number from 1 to 5, with 1 being "not at all" and 5 being "very well", how each alternative addressed each purpose.

Small group participants' top choices were upgrading US 281 to an expressway with frontage roads, grade separated intersections with short frontage roads, and expansion of parallel corridors. The No-Build alternative was ranked the lowest.

After each participant completed the Part 2 worksheet individually, a focused conversation was conducted in a similar fashion as Part 1. The following questions were asked at each table to

guide the discussion. A volunteer from each group was asked to take notes during this discussion.

- What about the alternatives stood out for you?
- What did you like about the alternatives?
- What concerns do you have about the alternatives?
- What did you think was most important factor to consider when assigning a number to the alternatives?
- Which of these alternatives would you use and why?

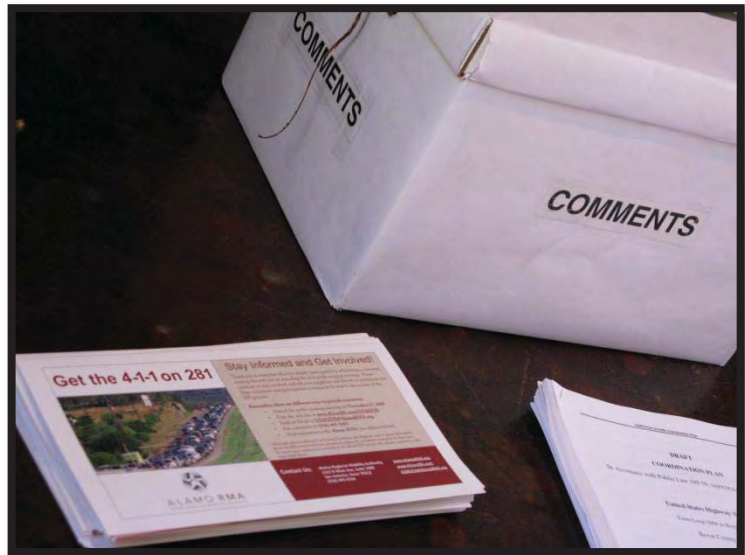
After each small group had completed Part 1 and Part 2 of the work session, a volunteer from each group shared the highlights of their small group's discussion with all meeting participants. A transcription of the reports given by each volunteer at the conclusion of the small group work session is included in **Appendix G**.

Copies of all exhibits located at each station, slide presentations, and meeting hand-outs are included in **Appendix C** and photos from the meeting are included in **Appendix D**.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments received by November 30, 2009, as established in the legal notice for Public Scoping Meeting #2, are included in this Meeting Report. Comments received after November 30, 2009 are included in the Meeting Report for Public Meeting #3 which occurred on April 27, 2010.

Numerous avenues existed to submit comments before the meeting, at the meeting and after the meeting. These included (1) filling out a comment card and dropping it into the comment box; (2) giving comments verbally to a court reporter; (3) submitting comments by fax, website and/or email; and (4)



mailing written comments to the Alamo RMA. All comments are recorded in **Section 4** of this report and a master comment listing, in alphabetical order by commenter, is included in **Appendix E**. All comments are included, in original form, in **Appendix F** and **Appendix G**.

3.1. Comments Received by the Alamo RMA from Elected/ Local Officials

There were no verbal or written comments received from elected/local officials.

3.2. Comments Received by the Alamo RMA from the Public

One hundred and twenty-nine (129) comments were received during the public comment period.

Written: One hundred and twenty-two (122) written comments were received during the public comment period from October 18 through November 30, 2009. The comments were comprised of 57 comment cards, 23 emails, comments noted on 32 meeting evaluation forms, 6 website

submissions, 2 mailed letters and 2 faxed letters. Comments submitted more than once were only counted as one comment. **Section 4** provides a record of the written comments received and **Appendix F** includes a copy of all written comments in original form.

Verbal Comments: Attendees were able to utilize a court reporter to document verbal comments as part of the meeting record. The court reporter was present from the start of Public Scoping Meeting #2 until the conclusion. There were seven verbal comments recorded by the court reporter during the Public Scoping Meeting. All seven individuals also handed the court reporter a comment card. The table in **Section 4** of this report provides a record of the verbal comments received. **Appendix G** includes a certified copy of the court report transcript and seven comment cards.

3.3. Meeting Evaluations Received by the Alamo RMA

Attendees were given the opportunity to fill out a meeting evaluation. Fifty meeting evaluations were received and the results have been compiled in the table below. The bottom section of the form provided space for other additional comments; 32 of the 50 evaluation forms included a comment. The comments on the meeting evaluation forms were counted as written comments and appear as part the record of comments received by the Alamo RMA (see **Appendix F**). The meeting evaluation forms are included in **Appendix F**.

Table 5. Meeting Evaluation Form Results

| How did you hear about the meeting? | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|----|--------------------------------|----|------------------------------|---|
| 411on 281.com | 11 | Church Bulletin | 0 | HOA/NA Bulletin | 6 |
| Sign Placed on US 281 Project Corridor | 10 | Friend/Family/Word of Mouth | 14 | Facebook | 0 |
| Twitter | 0 | Socializer | 1 | | |
| Newspaper | | San Antonio Express News | 2 | | |
| Radio | | KTSA | 4 | WOAI | 2 |
| TV | | KSAT | 2 | KENS | 1 |
| Email | | San Antonio-Bexar County MPO | 1 | Tommy Adkisson | 1 |
| | | Terri Hall | 1 | HOA | 1 |
| | | Alamo RMA | 4 | TURF | 4 |
| | | Timberwood POA | 1 | San Antonio Toll Party | 4 |
| | | Linda Ximenes | 1 | | |
| Other | | Mail | 7 | Community Advisory Committee | 1 |
| | | MySA.com | 1 | TURF Website | 2 |
| | | San Antonio Toll Party Website | 1 | 411on281 Mailer | 2 |
| | | Alamo RMA | 1 | | |

| Meeting Evaluation Questions:* | Did Not Like 1 | 2 | Somewhat Liked 3 | 4 | Liked Very Much 5 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---------------------|----|----------------------|
| How would you rate the location for tonight's meeting? | 5 | 3 | 13 | 11 | 17 |
| How would you rate the information presented and on display? | 2 | 7 | 22 | 7 | 10 |
| How would you rate the small group work format used for tonight's meeting? | 6 | 8 | 11 | 8 | 15 |

*Note: Not all questions were answered on all 50 forms.

3.4. Summary of Major Comments/ Issues Addressed

The majority of the comments were centered on issues relating to how the improvements would be funded and opposition to tolls. There were also questions and comments concerning the EIS process and the level of detail considered at each phase in the process; as well as the preliminary range of alternatives and the rationale behind the alternatives screening and evaluation process. The issues, topics and questions raised in these comments were grouped into general comment and response categories which are included in **Section 4.0**.

3.5. Recommendation

These comments will be used during the EIS process, especially in the alternative development and screening process; for the revision of the Draft Coordination Plan; and planning the next Public Meeting. There will be more public meetings throughout the process to ensure public involvement.

Here are some specific examples of how public comments have been used to make decisions within the EIS process since this Public Scoping Meeting:

- (1) Carried forward the following alternatives for further consideration in Level 2 and Level 3 of the alternatives evaluation and screening process: No-Build, Light Rail, Streetcars, Fixed Route Bus, Express Bus, Bus Rapid Transit, Add Lanes to Existing US 281, Grade Separated Intersections (or over passes), Expand Parallel Corridors (such as Blanco Road and Bulverde Road), Upgrade US 281 to an Expressway, High Occupancy Vehicles/High Occupancy Toll Lanes, Growth Management, Bike/Pedestrian Facilities, Transportation System Management and Transportation Demand Management.
- (2) Considered reversible lanes as an improvement option for US 281.
- (3) Eliminated the following alternatives from further consideration in the EIS process: Heavy Rail, Commuter Rail, Monorail, Automated Guideway Transit, Personal Rapid Transit and constructing a new parallel corridor.
- (4) Conducted additional engineering review of possible improvements to roadways parallel to US 281 such as Bulverde Road and Blanco Road
- (5) Developed alternatives with non-tolled and tolled lane options.
- (6) Considered access solutions such as frontage roads, backage roads and the purchase of access rights.
- (7) Strategies based on elements from *Mobility 2035* to address congestion and provide relief along US 281 were proposed as other alternatives. These strategies include Growth Management, Transportation System Management, Transportation Demand

Management, Bus, Park-n-Ride Facilities and Bike and Pedestrian Facilities. They can be applied to any alternative including the No-Build.

- (8) Through coordination with VIA, all the alternatives considered in the Draft EIS would provide a transit envelope which can accommodate future high capacity transit and a Park-n-Ride facility near Stone Oak Parkway.
- (9) Received and implemented the following advice at the next public meeting in April 2010 and in the US 281 public involvement program:
 - a. Reduced file size of downloads on project website
 - b. Made the small group exercise less technical and less structured
 - c. Selected a larger meeting facility with better parking
 - d. Provided more detailed information about mobility measures, environmental impacts and conceptual designs for improvements along US 281
 - e. Started sending out a monthly e-newsletter and using public comments to develop articles of interest for the community surrounding US 281
 - f. Displayed an up-to-date list of all cooperating and participating agencies is displayed on the project website.

4.0 RECORD OF COMMENTS RECEIVED BY THE ALAMO RMA

Table 6 includes a record of each comment received during the public comment period from October 18, 2009 through November 30, 2009 organized by the method the comment was received, such as comment card, email, fax, website, USPS mail or court reporter transcript.

The best way to find a comment is to go to **Appendix E**. It includes a list of all comments received, in alphabetical order by commenter name, as well as the corresponding **Reference #** and **Response**. Once the name and associated **Reference #** is found look for the **Reference #** in the first column of **Table 6** and/or look for the associated **Response** in **Section 5**. The **Reference #** can also be used to find scanned images of each written comment in **Appendix F** and the court reporter transcript of verbal comments in **Appendix G**.

Each comment is presented verbatim as it was received. All comments were considered and will continue to be considered throughout the EIS process to ensure a complete and factual assessment of the project's need and purpose, identification and development of all reasonable alternatives, analysis of potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts, assessment of mitigation measures and commitments, and to ensure that diligent efforts are being made to involve the public in the identification of social, economic and environmental impacts. Comments were given responses using the following approach:

- (1) If a comment simply shared a particular view point, without asking a question, it was given a response of "Comment Noted" in the last column of **Table 6**, labeled **Response**.
- (2) If a comment was submitted multiple times or several comments were related in topic, the comments were grouped logically and a general response and associated **Response** was given to each comment.
- (3) If a comment was only brought up by one person or was particularly complex in nature it was given a specific response. This is indicated by "Specific Response see **Section 5.2**" located in the **Response** column of **Table 6**.

Please use the last column of **Table 6**, labeled **Response**, to find the response associated with each comment in **Section 5**.

Table 6. Comment and Response Record

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | | | | If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why. | Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward? |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | | | | |
| 1 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | No toll roads – Why would we charge an entry fee to this city | Comment Card | 4 | |
| 2 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Take Bill Thornton, Nelson Wolfe, Kevin Wolfe and the rest of the lifetime politicians out of the mix. If you don't live or work on the 281 N corridor you can't decide the future of those of us that do. Our impact is daily. | Comment Card | Comment Noted | |
| 3 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Need to separate/define toll and non-toll options. We do not need or want toll road. | Comment Card | 4 | |
| 4 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Reversible lanes - cheaper than building (more) one-way lanes. | Comment Card | 8 | |
| 5 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Eliminate all options but (4-6), 8, 10 and 11 | Comment Card | 23 | |
| 6 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Upgrade existing 281 north of Loop 1604 to an expressway with frontage roads does not capture many of the advantages of "elevated reversible center lanes" those ideas need to be split out into two options so that it can be shown that the elevated lanes will cause no disruption to the current configuration. | Comment Card | 8 | |
| 7 | A | A | A | A | A | D | There is not enough North - South routes | | Comment Card | 2 | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | Comment | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | | |
| 8 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | |
| 9 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | |
| 10 | A | A | A | A | A | D | | | |
| 11 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | |
| 12 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | |
| 13 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | |
| 14 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | |
| 15 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | | Comment | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why. | Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward? | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Public Vote on Toll Rds | Comment Card | 7 | |
| 17 | A | A | A | A | A | D | Canyon Golf would suffice. | The extra load added when school starts seems convenience for procrastinating kids. | Comment Card | Comment Noted | |
| 18 | A | D | A | A | A | A | We need a mass transit system that moves people more quickly than cars. | No costs were discussed. We can't form good opinions without costs. Move the most cars the quickest we can at the lowest cost. Toll road proposals grossly overbuild. | Comment Card | 13, 14 | |
| 19 | A | A | A | A | Maybe | Maybe | Not practical for a huge geographical area! | Overpasses are the best solution and were funded years ago. Then - the legislature diverted the funds - as usual. Get the crooks out of the capital & return the funds. | Comment Card | 4, 11 | |
| 20 | D | D | D | D | D | D | All - widen Existing Row - Non Toll. | Overpasses, widen lanes, - no toll. | Comment Card | 4 | |
| 21 | A | A | A | A | A | A | Texans drive to and from their destination. The rails don't get you all the way there and back. | | Comment Card | Comment Noted | |
| 22 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Some - #8 & #10. The “objectives” and “alternatives” are often very broad - "the devil is in the details." The political process must listen to the people (the voters) as the details are developed. No toll roads!!! | Comment Card | 1, 4, 13 | |
| 23 | D | D | D | D | D | D | | 1- Yes; 3-Yes | Comment Card | Comment Noted | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why. | | Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward? | | |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | |
| 24 | | | | | | | 1- light rail; 2-express bus service; 3- grade separated intersections; 4- upgrade US 281 to expressway; 5-HOV lanes | Comment Card Noted |
| 25 | A | A | A | D | D | D | 1 - Yes; 2- Yes; 3- Yes | Comment Card Noted |
| 26 | D | D | D | D | D | D | Grade separated intersections; Expand parallel corridors Blanco & Bulverde; upgrade US 281 to an expressway; bus rapid transit - no bus service beyond 1604 on 281 | Comment Card 2 |
| 27 | A | A | A | A | A | A | I especially like the light rail & expressway alternatives. The no build option is no option. | Comment Card 2 |
| 28 | A | D | A | A | A | A | A rail might work if there were enough people who would ride it to a specific place 281 to I-10 | Comment Card 2 |
| 29 | A | A | A | A | A | A | Good range of alternatives. Some objectives missing i.e. timely consideration and cost effectiveness. Definitely like to see alternatives 8, 10, and 11 researched in detail and unbiased assessments made available to the public. | Comment Card 1, 2 |
| 30 | A | A | A | A | A | A | #8 and #10 | Comment Card 2 |
| 31 | D | D | D | D | A | A | Just complete a total fix to relieve congestion whether tolled or not tolled. | Comment Card Noted |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why. | | | |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | | | |
| 32 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Build Overpasses | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 33 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Build Overpasses | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 34 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | No Tolls | Comment Card | 4 |
| 35 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | No Tolls - listen to the people. | Comment Card | 4 |
| 36 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | I wish we had more information about each alternative's environmental impacts - this info should be included now (not in the last steps of the process. | Comment Card | 5 |
| 37 | | | | | | | Agreed w/alternatives that were eliminated | Really like the format of the meeting & the breaking up of small group & discussing the alternatives. Gives everyone opportunity to give feedback. | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 38 | | | | | | | | I don't have a solution for this one, but people need a better understanding of choices & consequences. How would light rail function to serve this community? What would the system be like by just adding lanes? | Comment Card | 2, 6 |
| 39 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Yes - build lanes to include add'l left & right turn lanes - now!!! | Comment Card | 2 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | | |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | | |
| 40 | | A | | | | D | It will give addition lane + ease congestion on existing lanes - commuter rail would need parking lots to leave vehicles where you board!! | Alternatives that would include more passes or multi-layered expressways (such as has been done at Loop 410 and IH 10). | Comment Card 2 |
| 41 | | | | | | | | #8 & #10 are confusing. We were told that the "questions" had to be confusing, rather than straight forward. They reminded me of an election that was never in doubt - confusing by design! | Comment Card Comment Noted |
| 42 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Should show cost both toll vs. non-toll. Also cost of toll/? is also an issue San Antonio shouldn't allow building if don't have roads to support growth. | Comment Card 4, 13 |
| 43 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | Need 5th column for purpose objective of "lower cost." Maximum use of access - HOV or HOT access are not used to maximum capacity. | Comment Card 1 |
| 44 | D | D | D | D | D | A | San Antonio Mass transit infrastructure is not built enough for any Transit system to fix 281. | I think the over express way is the solution. It will have less impact to the Environment and will address growth, traffic volume, etc... I also think the superstreet will not help; you can reduce the cycles by changing the sequence at each intersection. | Comment Card 2, 15 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | Comment | Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward? | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | | | |
| 45 | D | D | D | D | D | D | | Process too complicated no reliable environmental data. All funds should be used for non toll road. No funds used for transit | Comment Card | 5, 4 |
| 46 | D | D | D | D | D | D | Build freeway on US 281N. | Keep Cost Low. Too Many levels of Cost that is TXDOT - MPO - Alamo RMA - dissolve the RMA - duplication of efforts - waste of money. Process to complicated - no reliable environmental data. All funds should be used for non-toll road. No funds used for transit. | Comment Card | 4, 5 |
| 47 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 48 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 49 | A | A | A | A | | D | | | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 50 | D | D | D | D | D | | | | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 51 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 52 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 53 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 54 | A | A | A | A | A | A | | | Comment Card | Comment Noted |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | | | |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | | | |
| 55 | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward? | Comment Card | Comment Noted |
| 56 | A | A | A | A | A | A | A | Lowest cost non toll alternative. Competitive bidding requirement | Comment Card - Mail | Specific Response see Section 5.2 |
| 57 | A | D | A | A | A | D | | 1. Disagree Commuter Rail: I believe commuter rail should be included in the alternatives for this project. Your briefing says that Commuter Rail should be eliminated because there is no existing rail line and that it is not compatible with corridor plans. 2. It is true that there is no existing rail line. However there is an Existing Union Pacific rail line from downtown north up along 281 until just before Airport Blvd. This particular rail segment is being | Email | Specific Response see Section 5.2 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | |
| 57, Cont. | | | | | | | <p>If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why.</p> | <p>Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward?</p> | |
| | | | | | | | <p>developed for passenger rail service by the Austin-San Antonio Inter-municipal Commuter Rail District. a. It is possible to use the existing line and build an additional line north from where the existing line diverges from 281. This would better connect this existing line to the airport. b. Corridor plans should include all possible ways of moving commuters to and from the suburbs, especially those that do not require automobiles. The MPO should include commuter rail up the US 281 corridor from downtown to at least the county line as part of their overall plan to move people off the roads and onto alternative</p> | <p>hours. This planning should use “Smart Transportation.” As defined by PennDOT and NJDOT, “Smart Transportation recommends a new approach to roadway planning and design, in which transportation investments are tailored to the specific needs of each project. The different contexts - financial, community, land use, transportation, and environmental - determine the design of the solution. The best transportation solution arises from a process in which a multi-disciplinary team, considering a wide range of solutions, works closely with the community. Inclusive of context sensitive solutions (CSS), Smart Transportation also encompasses network connectivity, and access and corridor management. It will help both states and communities adapt to the new financial context of constrained resources.”</p> <p>Transportation planning needs to include multi-modal alternatives. Your study does include several primary alternatives. The plan should not include only one of the alternatives mentioned, but a range of alternatives that together help reduce the bottleneck created by all traffic being funneled onto 281. In other words, the solution</p> | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | |
| | | | | | | | <p>Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward?</p> | |
| 57, Cont. | | | | | | | <p>If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why.</p> | |
| | | | | | | | <p>needs to be a mix of different alternatives that do the following: 1. Plan for proper connectivity. Create different paths for people to flow to and from different destinations along the 281 corridor. For instance, commuters that need to go south of 1604 may use their vehicles on 281, take a form of rapid transit to their destination (fixed or non-fixed guideway) or other alternatives for local destinations. 2. One alternative that needs to be included in this study is Ride Sharing. This is a little used alternative that reduces the number of vehicles using a corridor by a factor equal to the number of extra passengers (above 1) that are sharing the vehicle. Mandatory or "encouraged" ride sharing could significantly reduce the vehicle load in this corridor. 3. As noted below, we need to define and develop streets that meet the needs of the context in which people are traveling. I've seen street types defined this way: a. Arterial – Regional b. Arterial - Community c. Collector – Community d. Collector – Neighborhood e. Local 4. 281 is both a regional and community arterial road. As such, it serves two purposes. One, it provides a regional (National) highway from north to south Texas –</p> | |
| | | | | | | | <p>transportation. c. By taking this option off the table, you could be skewing the results toward additional vehicle volumes. We need to plan to take cars off the road if at all possible, not add only automobile capacity. 3. Disagree – New Parallel Corridor. As the population swells north of 1604, there needs to be additional capacity. a. Right now, Blanco is being widened to handle additional capacity, but there is only marginal north-south additional capacity being added east of 281 on Bulverde Road. b. This area is underdeveloped at the moment and an additional corridor should be considered – specifically</p> | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | | | |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why. | | |
| 57, Cont. | | | | | | | Bulverde Road or another alternative not yet planned as the east side of 281 is developed. c. By eliminating the alternative of an additional new parallel corridor where there is capacity to do so, you are skewing the data in favor of just expanding 281. This would make 281 expansion look like the only reasonable alternative, which is certainly not the case. Why not consider increasing the capacity of both Blanco Road and Bulverde Road? | Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward? | to and through San Antonio. Two, it provides a regional highway to transport people to/from their community destinations. 5. We need to keep the US Highway 281 that serves as a regional arterial open and available to those who are transiting through San Antonio to another destination (to the coast, for example). Tolling should not be an option for these users, as the road serves as the regional National freeway to and from regional destinations. 6. 281 is also a community arterial. But not everyone who is currently funneled onto 281 needs to be there. What is needed is a series of “alternate routes” or local streets to and from local and not-too-distant destinations. This would keep a lot of traffic off of the main artery. For instance, developing alternate back access to/from the shopping centers (especially on the same side of 281) such as Bulverde Road, Blanco Road and others would allow those needing to get to the stores, etc., to get there “the back way” and stay off of 281. There needs to be sufficient “back roads,” and this needs to be part of the alternatives studied to eliminate congestion on 281. 7. Currently, most of the residential |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | | |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | |
| 57, Cont. | | | | | | | <p>Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward?</p> | |
| | subdivisions have limited access or actually enter/exit only onto 281, which does not have access roads. This type “pod development” funnels drivers onto 281, causing additional congestion. Developing more “back road” paths to/from these areas would alleviate much of that congestion and keep folks off of 281. At the very least, access roads must be implemented all along 281 where vehicles now have access only directly onto 281. 8. Unfortunately, a lot of development has taken place without concurrent planned highway development and action. Planning for the future of the corridor should include provisions to add those features and provisions that have not been made up to this point. Band-Aiding the problem by simply fixing 281 without adding the additional transportation infrastructure will not really solve the problem. An access management plan should be in every alternative considered. 9. We need to take a more long-range look at the needs of the entire 281 corridor. We should not fix the current stretch of 281 in isolation. As I noted above, there is a lot of current development going on both in the area being studied and north of that. | | | | | | | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | | |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | |
| 57, Cont. | | | | | | | <p>Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward?</p> | |
| | | | | | | | <p>Unless we plan for how the entire 281 corridor is developed, there is a good possibility that we will “fix” the current problem only to have the same problem north of the newly developed roadway. Further, if we build a lot of capacity into the currently-studied stretch of 281, will this extra load cause backups when it funnels into the existing portion of 281 south of 1604? Or back up as people exit to take 1604 east and west? Or when it funnels into two lanes on 281 north of the expansion? This all needs to be planned accordingly. It is critical for any analysis of US 281 improvements to examine the congestion impacts on US 281, Loop 1604 and other arterial roadways outside of the immediate study area. 10. To sum up some of the above, in the local 281 corridor, it comes down to connectivity and access management. There needs to be a well thought out scheme to allow interconnections in the local area, to take the pressure off of making everyone funnel into 281. 11. There have been plans for many years to put overpasses (grade separated intersections - option 8). This alternative will solve 90% of the congestion problem, at a cost far less than any tolled</p> | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | | | | | | | |
| | Heavy Rail | Commuter Rail | Monorail | Automated Guideway Transit | Personal Rapid Transit | New Parallel Corridor | | | |
| 57, Cont. | | | | | | | <p>If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why.</p> | <p>Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward?</p> | |
| | | | | | | | <p>alternative. We, as taxpayers and drivers, have already paid for this type of project many times over. We should not have to pay for it again by tolling the existing (expanded) roadway. Let's get on with building this option, or something similar. If some of the other local interconnections cannot be made in the short run, I believe that option 10 would be a better alternative by keeping most of the local traffic on the access roads. 12. Speaking of overpasses, we should also discuss alternatives to stop lights at the intersections. One excellent alternative, highly touted by the Federal Highway Administration, is roundabouts. I Understand that there are many good reasons for this, one of the principal ones being a significant reduction in intersection-related crashes (especially fatal ones). My own personal experience living in the United Kingdom for many years (where roundabouts are the norm) is that they are far superior to traffic lights and should be seriously considered during design of the overpasses. I understand that roundabouts are eligible for 100% federal funding due to their safety characteristics. 13. I also believe that adding HOV or HOT lanes (alternative 11) is not</p> | | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why. | | Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward? | | | |
| 57, Cont. | Heavy Rail | | | | | | the answer. These lanes are usually reserved for “through traffic” which is not planning on exiting the highway until the HO lane ends. However, many of the current drivers backed up on 281 are, in fact, going to destinations along this area of 281. So providing the HOV/T lanes would only reduce some congestion for those going farther north or south. I very much believe that we, as taxpayers and drivers, have paid into the gas tax fund for a long time. We also pay our federal taxes, some of which are used to construct new national freeways. We deserve to “get what we paid for” and what we expect from local, state and national government. Our state leaders have both raided the transportation funds for other requirements and funneled funds into other projects (such as the Wurzbach Parkway) in such a way as to make the case for “we are out of money, we have emergency needs, and we can only fix it with tolled roads.” As taxpayers, we will not stand for this. As the MPO meeting recently at the Alzafar Temple showed, the taxpayers in San Antonio do not want tolled roads. We especially do not want tolled roads tolled in perpetuity. This is morally | |
| | Commuter Rail | | | | | | | |
| | Monorail | | | | | | | |
| | Automated Guideway Transit | | | | | | | |
| | Personal Rapid Transit | | | | | | | |
| | New Parallel Corridor | | | | | | | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #.) | Comment | | | | | | Method Comment was Received | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Please let us know your thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. Do the preliminary alternatives capture the range of alternatives you would like to see? Do the alternatives that have been carried forward represent options you would like to see studied in more detail? Are there any other items you would like us to be aware of as the process moves forward? | | | | | | | |
| | Please let us know your thoughts about the preliminary alternatives that are considered “fatally flawed” and being recommended for elimination. Please check “agree” or “disagree” for the alternatives below. | | If you disagree with any of the alternatives being eliminated, please tell us which ones and why. | | | | | |
| 57, Cont. | Heavy Rail | | | | | | unconscionable. There have to be other alternatives to tolls, and I believe there are. In conclusion. As part of your EIS study of alternatives, you also need to provide a range of alternatives that take the pressure off of 281 while fixing the capacity problem on 281. Your plan and your study focus on “fixing the 281 problem” in isolation from the other transportation planning practices that also need to be a part of the plan, especially the connectivity and access issues, which your plan does not include. | |
| | Commuter Rail | | | | | | | |
| | Monorail | | | | | | | |
| | Automated Guideway Transit | | | | | | | |
| | Personal Rapid Transit | | | | | | | |
| | New Parallel Corridor | | | | | | | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 58 | I have lived in Encino Park and commuted downtown every day for 13 years so I am familiar with the problems plaguing 281. Here are my comments: 1. The preliminary alternatives are fine. I prefer Grade separated intersections and Expand parallel corridors. 2. There is a flaw in the objectives: there is no mention of alternatives for funding. It appears that tolls are the implicit choice for funding. One objective is to "maximize the use of non-toll funds", but there is no mention of tolling. I oppose tolling for generating any funds above what it costs to expand 281. I resent being a cash cow for TXDOT projects all over the state. Tolls could significantly reduce property values in Encino Park because of the extra cost and inconvenience of getting in and out of Encino Rio, which would obviously affect me. 3. Reduce the size of the pdf files. Even with DSL, they are slow to download, and people with a dialup connection probably can't view them. As a small business owner and a resident of Encino Park, I am totally opposed to a toll road for the 281 expansion. I am in favor of the Superstreet concept. | Email | 1, 2, 4, 20, See Section 3.5 #9. |
| 59 | With the rapid growth and development on 281, north of 1604, it is time for the roads to finally catch up. I believe the best solution would be to turn this section of road into a freeway (with no lights, just like it is south of 1604 and north of Borgfield). I think the idea of toll roads has pushed aside any other reasonable and more affordable solutions, such as overpasses. I don't think we even need all the money up front to begin construction. We can begin with just one overpass at a time as we accumulate the money to pay for more. The important thing is to stop delaying and get started on the solution. I would not even be opposed to an increase in the gas tax to pay for these improvements, as long as the money was not diverted to other projects. | Email | 4, 15 |
| 60 | We moved into this community to provide a safe place for our families. We are already paying higher taxes and higher expenses just to live here. We are by no means wealthy. A toll would be the tax that nails this coffin shut. We would have no choice but to move as my husband commutes over 30 miles just to get to work. The super street is a waste of time. It would seem that it is the RMA's intention is to frustrate its citizens into begging for the toll road option. We are not and never will beg for a toll road option. We will patiently wait for the overpasses if time is what you need. We have been sitting in traffic this long....we can wait a little longer. (We have lived here for over nine years) We do not wish to see toll roads....under any circumstance. Understandably, the RMA is an appointed board....but if toll roads prevail, I will be voting against those that appointed this board. What is more is that those serving on this board will never receive our support if and when deciding to run for office themselves. The toll roads are not an acceptable option. | Email | 2, 4, 21 |
| 61 | | Email | 2, 4, 21 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 62 | What is wrong with you people? Why do you keep having meetings about the traffic problems on 281 North? The population has told you to widen the road or build overpasses, why don't you just listen and stop having those meetings. I have lived here for 3.5 years in the Stone Oak area, and cannot believe that San Antonio will not fix their traffic issues faster. Stop having meetings about it and just fix it, please. | Email | 19 |
| 63 | I agree with the objectives of accommodating growth, functionality, safety and enhancing the quality of life...rather saving time which metamorphically speaking, saves our lives. However, I am much more concerned about the methodology - the means by which we will accomplish these objectives. I am adamantly against making 281 a toll road. When I moved here, I had no idea that this would ever happen. It will make this area of town much less desirable and bring down the value of homes. And that in turn, reduces the tax base. I certainly would not have bought in this area, if there were toll roads and I had to pay to enter and exit my home to go food shopping. If we are discussing the means by which we are accomplishing these goals, I will save my thoughts for the meeting tonight. I will want to speak and will need about 5 minutes, if there is a forum. | Email | 1, 4, 20 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 64 | <p>I have not attended any of the community meetings but wanted to get a few comments in while I could: I lived in Dallas for over 30 years and spent quite a bit of work time in Houston before moving to SA 4 years ago. I understand very well the benefits and advantages of toll roads that those cities enjoy and we don't. Anyone who opposes it just doesn't understand it. If they had a chance to experience it, their attitude would change quickly. Everyone wins. If you want to pay the toll, you can do that and enjoy a quicker trip on better roads. If you don't want to pay the toll, you can do that too on additional lanes on better roads with less traffic since much of your previous congestion is over on the toll lanes. Everyone wins. No one loses. My big concern now is the Super Street concept. I've seen that tried in a few places with poor results. Think logically for a minute. If you force additional traffic onto 281 that wasn't there before and doesn't want to be there and then force them to make turns that weren't made before, then you've just increased your problem and spent a lot of money doing it. Adding cars to your problem street will NEVER make it better. I can tell you one quick fix that would cost nothing and might buy you a little time. Add 5 seconds to the north/south light sequences on 281 and the left turn signals at Evans. This would greatly improve the north/south flow which is where your problem is. The east/west flow has nowhere near the problem that north/south does and it should be the other way around. Allow the east/west traffic to stack up a little more and keep 281 moving better. Also, the Evans intersection congestion could be greatly improved with a couple of steps. Lengthen the left turn lanes in both directions with additional hard pavement to get those cars out of the way of the north south traffic. There is room for extension in both directions. Put a crossover turn lane in front of HEB and Jack in the Box. This would allow a lot of the intersection traffic to exit the highway at other points. Much of the northbound left turn traffic at Evans is trying to get to the HEB center. They could go thru the light and turn left at HEB. Much of the southbound traffic is trying to turn left to get to the Spectrum, Arby's, Whataburger, etc. or they are coming out of HEB trying to go northbound. This traffic could turn left before the Evans intersection. The resulting reduction of congestion at the Evans intersection would be huge. All these suggestions would have minimal or no cost, would be quickly done, and would have an immediate impact. That would then give you time to come up with the proper long term solution. One last comment, I can assure you that a huge majority of the population favors the tollway. For some reason, only the dissidents like to come to meetings and protest. I guess that's what makes them dissidents. If it wasn't the tollway, it would be some other issue being protested.</p> | Email | Specific Response see Section 5.2 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 65 | 1. In response to the mailing we received regarding Hwy 281 Alternatives: after careful consideration of the options presented, no other options/alternatives come to mind. However, there is one clear objection that should be addressed: public safety is jeopardized when there are bicyclists on a highly congested Hwy such as 281. There is a need for pedestrians to have somewhere safe to gather in the event of an accident. Therefore, sidewalks are desirable. 2. We believe that the purposes/objectives as listed define the type of improvements we would like to see in US 281 corridor. 3. Alternatives represented in flowchart appear to be all encompassing. Please study in detail. We live in Encino Park and every day we have to plan our comings and goings to avoid the backups either to get out of Encino Park or return. We see nothing in any of the plans offered so far that will make it safe for us to exit our neighborhood at any time of the day. The once premier subdivision and its safety has been ignored by all the planners. We are opposed to the toll road proposal even though, as we are reminded by those on boards who support it, that we can use the 'free' access road. That is not the point! We are tired of being told that we don't understand the issues that they say are too complex and ever changing for those not constantly involved to understand. Excuse us, but if that is true, then we have no one to blame, but the elected officials who made it that way and those appointed to boards who act for their own self interest and not the interests of those who live in the area and are impacted. We hope the EIS will seriously listen to the residents of the affected subdivisions and not treat us like a nuisance. Any meeting we have been to so far appears to be more for show than to take us seriously. | Email | 22 |
| 66 | I will back whatever you do with 281 as long as it improves the traffic. San Antonio should be ashamed of themselves for the traffic disaster on 281. The building permits were given out for 1000's of new homes with no thought to how the traffic would be handled. The new HEB was built in an already congested area. For those of us who must use 281, we are trapped by traffic. I live 5.5 miles from 1604 and many mornings, traffic is backed up past my house and I can expect a drive of 45 minutes just to get to 1604. I no longer spend my dollars at the stores along 281 because of the traffic. I would have been the first in line for the sticker for my car to use the toll road!!!! Please not another study and more delays. While I would not look forward to the construction zone, at least something would be happening to improve the traffic and we could see that something is being done. It's time for some action!!!! | Email | Specific Response see Section 5.2 |
| 67 | | Email | Comment Noted |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 68 | <p>Thank you for the newsletters and updates on 281 progress. I've lived in San Antonio four times since 1992, due to military moves. When we first did our research and moved north of 281 in 2006, we knew of the potential growth and construction, and expected a great improvement in the road system. Other major metropolitan areas I've lived had growth too...but with significantly faster action on road and intersection improvements. In fact, public transportation was a great alternative in Maryland, Minnesota, Georgia, Colorado, and Illinois - all places I've lived in the past 17 years. I am terribly disappointed and angry that San Antonio is behind the times in all aspects of public transportation. The drive down 281 from Bulverde Village to 1604 can take over 30 minutes to drive the 7 miles. I could ride my bike faster than that....but would be terrified for my life by so many drivers' lack of basic driving skills: lack of driver courtesy, no turn signals, multiple lane changes, etc. If a train or bus alternative was available to take me to work, I certainly would use that option...but I would have to walk over a mile in the heat, rain, etc if I took a bus that even came close to Fort Sam. All I can say....I can't wait until my tour is over and move away from San Antonio. I love my home, I love my neighborhood, and I realize lots and lots of people love it here. I can't stand the heat, I can't stand the drivers, and I can't stand the lack of public transportation and neglect to take action on the infrastructure north of 281. The shops, construction, and neighborhood building is nothing new....It's been a long time coming folks....why is it taking soooooo long to do something about the roads? Other cities seem to manage the process and address the issues with some type of action. Something, anything....do something! I could go on and on....but I'll keep the cursing to myself.</p> | Email | 19 |
| 69 | <p>In the short time that I've lived here it seems obvious to me that San Antonio lacks the City Planning leadership that is needed to keep the current traffic load moving, much less the future load. We have major intersections that are managed with stop signs, mix masters that have cross over entrance and exits, a city sectioned and divided by enclosed communities with no through traffic relief and forever. Ongoing discussion about doing something about 281. Want a suggestion? Build bridges and widen the road. Now send me the salary you give to the planners.</p> | Email | Comment Noted |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 70 | <p>First, I live in the 281 North corridor, not in southside or Austin or Washington, DC. Second, the continual environmental studies is a waste of tax dollars - how many do you need - six, 10 or 20? Third, forget that "super highway" turn lanes and turnaround plan - it will not eliminate congestion as long as traffic lights persist. So what to do? Eliminate all traffic lights, build overpasses at Evans and Stone Oak, and use those turnarounds at Overlook, Marshall and Encino Rio. This will eliminate car and truck pollution; reduce traffic on north-south routes like Bulverde and Stone Oak. This makes the most sense - and no tolls!!!!!! However, since the decision lies with southsiders and Austin liberals, we'll face years of environmental studies and nothing will change except the cost will continue to increase each year. Listen to the people most affected! Stop the overkill and dominance of the leftist EPA! And, no tolls!!!!!! You want to spend millions on a rail system which is another liberal idea - "got the money, got to spend it." This would be so easy if you just got past the BS of the EPA.</p> | Email | Comment Noted |
| 71 | <p>Thank you for your direct mail piece regarding the 281 corridor traffic issues. We are baffled and greatly disappointed that we are even involved in a discussion about these issues. It is completely unacceptable, and unfathomable for any citizen to believe that this kind of problem in a modern community should exist. The whole process is haphazard and backwards to me. Areas of growth should be selected, and basic traffic patterns should be the first thing analyzed, planned for, and installed before the permits for developments are even accepted. This creates so many positive factors in the community and it is bizarre that we have not adopted these policies a long time ago. Why not get that passed as a city ordinance immediately so we stop this madness for the future. The benefits for planned growth to name a few would be: much increased value and appreciation in current homes; less stress on our resources i.e. water, sewer, power, trash; massive influx of home improvement contracts no traffic issues due to a real plan of maximum growth; budgetary preparation; happy citizens; low stress for city planners. That being said what we need is a professional solution to the traffic and roads problems. I believe we should go find and hire the right people to handle the process. In the meantime quick fixes should be the goal. Overpasses and more lanes on 1604 and 281 are a must.</p> | Email | Comment Noted |
| 72 | <p>I thought that we were receiving stimulus money to construct 1/2 of the interchange. When will construction start?</p> | Email | 15 |
| 73 | <p>This is what should happen with 281: (1) Install overpasses at Encino Rio, Evans and other intersections going North to the Comal Co/Bexar county line, (2) Build access roads on the North and South bound sides, (3) Only Free Lanes – We already paid for this highway with our taxes - no toll roads</p> | Email | Comment Noted |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 74 | I just received the mailing from the Alamo RMA in today's mail. I do not understand why the Alamo RMA does not understand that the people of Bexar County do not want toll roads. Oh, maybe I do. All of the paid staff at the RMA believe themselves above all the common people who have to drive this road every day. Why is the Alamo RMA afraid and shaking to let the people of Bexar County vote on this toll? Probably because it would be the biggest lopsided vote in the history of democracy! I am not a member of TURF or anything having to do with Terri Hall, but just a simple lawyer who drives 281 most every day. (Yes, I was smart enough to make it through law school.) The only people that I know that are in favor of toll roads are: 1. those paid to support it; 2. those who will make money off the construction of it; and 3. lap dogs to Rick Perry. Nobody else! No matter how hard you try, the citizens will not allow toll roads to be built. | Email | 4, 7 |
| 75 | Just build 3 overpasses on Encino Rio, Evans & Stone Oak. A very unhappy with Alamo RMA taxpayer. | Email | Comment Noted |
| 76 | Quit screwing around and build the overpasses.....are you people idiots??? Why are you going against the wishes of 90% of NE San Antonio's population with this stupid, greedy toll road business?? I am totally ashamed of Mr. Thornton and Brechtel...or whatever her name is...for siding with the enemy in this mess...the enemy being whoever it is in Austin pushing toll roads!!! Thornton, you were not a very good mayor and you are even a worse chairman of this terrible Alamo RMA group!! | Email | Comment Noted |
| 77 | Last night meeting was interesting. My question is how can we grade options without having a better idea about the projects? It does not make sense to me not understanding in detail the options as well as cost and timeframe involved for each. What is wrong with just putting overpasses and getting the time frame and cost on that? It seems the majority of people want this and I am not understanding why this is not addressed. Apparently, TxDOT wants us to look at these others but I cannot make a better judgment without more details. If it were my business and money I was spending, I would like to know I more details. Do you really want intelligent feedback? I don't get it. | Email | 2, 13 |
| 78 | The purpose and need of this project is primarily congestion relief. Currently there are a series of stop lights that impede the flow of traffic. US 281 is a divided highway that needs to be upgraded to a controlled access highway. The gas tax funds to do the first 3 miles of improvements have been available since 2003, and the remaining funds (\$100 million total estimated cost per TxDOT documents for let dates of 2003 & 2004) to complete the improvements to the county line were available by 2006. The Governor, Texas Legislature, and MPO decided to toll existing freeways in 2003, so the overpasses and improvements promised in NEPA hearings in 2001 have yet to be installed. Overpasses will solve the problem. The RMA can only keep its doors open if it builds toll roads. It has no other steady source of revenue. Its mission is to toll the entire | Email | Specific Response see Section 5.2 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 78, Cont. | <p>northside and create a toll system or network as a means of generating revenue to build other segments or roadways, not relieving traffic congestion. In fact, toll lanes aren't viable or won't be able to stay financially solvent unless there is congestion on the surrounding free lanes, thereby ensuring poor air quality due to idling vehicles stuck on frontage road permanently, for those that cannot afford the tolls (Since the majority of drivers will not be able to avail themselves of the new improvements under a tolled scenario). The toll viability studies already done for 281 show it is not toll viable (meaning not enough projected traffic to pay for the cost of construction, operation, and maintenance of the toll road). The most recent 281 toll viability study was criticized by the State Auditor for not taking into account fuel prices in traffic forecasts. The RMA also added 20% growth to the water development board's already aggressive growth estimates, which is unsustainable. The 281 toll project needs massive public subsidies, so commuters will have to pay triple taxes just to drive on a freeway they drive on today toll-free (281 is a gas tax funded public freeway and we'll continue to pay gas taxes, public money will be used to subsidize the construction cost of the toll road, then a third tax, a toll tax to drive on it). Non-compete agreements in toll contracts penalize or prohibit expansion of free routes surrounding the toll lanes and unnecessarily ties-up our future for 30-50 years. The RMA claims that TxDOT, the city, and county can still build and expand free roads, but those entities will not do anything that would put the toll road bonds in jeopardy of default, so the non-competes will effectively bring expansion of surrounding free roads to a grinding halt. The RMA has never justified how the \$100 million original plan for 281 got to the enormous \$475 million toll road price tag or \$1.3 billion with interest (except perhaps the fact that we've done away with competitive bidding and threw out low-bid mandates using contracts called design-build). Nor has the RMA explained how it's going to "leverage" Texas Mobility Funds (TMF) funds in \$27 million increments over 20 years to get the money they need in one lump sum to build the toll road. The RMA has already disclosed it does not plan for the toll to ever come off the road, which makes this a permanent new tax to access an existing freeway already built and paid for. The RMA's toll road proposal in the previous Environmental Assessment for 281 violates Senator Hutchinson's amendment prohibiting imposing tolls on existing federally funded highways. Every single main lane will be tolled, with frontage roads as the only non-toll lanes. Frontage roads are not an acceptable replacement for highway lanes. The footprint of the project has to be widened due to a state law that prohibited converting free roads to toll roads unless the same numbers of lanes remain after imposing tolls. Considering this project traverses the sensitive Edwards Aquifer, unnecessary lanes ought not to be built under any circumstances. The toll road requires 200,000 cars a day in the out years in order to stay solvent -- more than double the cars that take it now. This is not only unsustainable with only one added expressway lane; it poses environmental threats due to the dependence upon an ever increasing number of vehicles per day in order to meet debt service requirements for a toll road.</p> | | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 78, Cont. | <p>Such a plan also runs afoul of the MPO's own long range plan that states its mission is to have an "environmentally-friendly," "affordable" transportation system. The impacts of tolling are severe economically, environmentally, and socially, whereas a non-toll fix can be less invasive, actually solve congestion, and not inflict economic harm to businesses, residents, and commuters with new taxes to get to and from work, shopping, hospitals, school, the airport, or their own homes. The toll roads also bring with it a massive public debt that San Antonians cannot afford to repay. It will also necessitate huge and ever-increasing debt service payments that will eat-up all the money for free roads in our region and will create the need for higher tolls and ever increasing public subsidies to cover the debt service as it has in Austin and DFW. Toll roads also pose safety problems as emergency service vehicles cannot easily access the toll lanes due to cement barriers and the extremely limited access to them. Accidents cannot be cleared as quickly nor is there the same amount of room on shoulders or other stretches of right of way for people to swerve and avoid accidents. Because toll roads create permanent diversion of traffic (cut-through traffic) to neighborhood or surrounding streets from those avoiding paying the tolls, tolling makes surrounding free roads less safe as high speed thru traffic competes with local traffic. This is supported by data from an Ohio toll road. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison read these comments into the congressional record May 10, 2005: "Tolling existing highways will also increase the number of drivers on the free roads, resulting in greater congestion and more accidents. Studies show that drivers will choose to bypass the tolls by driving on local, small roads. We also know that tolls on existing interstates will produce substantial diversion of truck traffic to other roads, and our rural roads are not equipped to handle significant truck traffic. In Ohio, traffic tripled on US-20 after toll increases on the Ohio Turnpike. Unfortunately, fatal accidents on US 20 are now 17 times more common than those on the turnpike. In response, Ohio's Department of Transportation decided to lower the tolls, even though the action did reduce the revenues for the State. A recent study predicted that a 25-cent-per-mile toll on an interstate would cause nearly half the trucks to divert to other routes. This is an understandable economic decision for trucking companies considering that truckers' profit margins average 2 to 4 cents per mile and the rising price of gasoline has already affected profitability. Technology already exists to help truckers and other drivers evade tolls in a cost-effective manner. It does not make sense to invest in tolls that people will not pay. Tolling interstates would reduce the safety of nearby local roads, degrade the quality of life in neighboring areas, and hurt the economy. Eighty percent of the Nation's goods travel by truck, and they will travel more slowly and expensively if tolls are imposed on interstates. The Federal Government collects taxes to fund the Federal interstate highway system. The States should not have the right to come in and impose another tax via a toll." Senator Hutchison's comments apply equally to imposing tolls on state highways that were also built with federal funds. The RMA must meet its legal obligations to coordinate with local units of government throughout</p> | | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 78, Cont. | this process, and it must consider ALL alternatives, including non-toll expansion of the existing highway. It also violates NEPA to keep vital financial information like toll viability studies secret from the public. The state law the RMA cites does not comport with the requirements of NEPA. Only by the RMA's delay in asking for an Attorney General opinion has the public been able to access the latest 281 toll viability study. The public cannot properly weigh alternatives and give meaningful input on the various alternatives without being able to analyze the viability of an alternative. | | |
| 79 | <p>I checked the posted info on the website, but did not see a date for the next public meeting next month - please advise so I can schedule my time. Thanks. Also wanted to submit below 8 comments for the EIS record and consideration: (1) It is high time to resolve this traffic congestion problem for which planning was started over 20 years ago. Do we really need to wait another 3 years to complete the EIS to then start construction (if there are funds)? (2) All the excuses about insufficient funds are bogus. The North Central area of San Antonio has grown more than most areas in Texas, taxes have been collected and continue to be collected from all these new homeowners and from additional gas purchases, and in recent years funding (\$45M) was assigned, but no results! Enough excuses about changes in TxDOT decisions - these decisions could be overturned, just like they were made. (3) If this road is tolled, it would be the first in San Antonio and Bexar County. Why this area only and not other areas? Why would the home owners in this area be singled out to toll a Government-owned main artery into town, when other roads are not tolled? People purchased their homes at a time when there were no tolls. (4) The law is clear that one cannot toll public property. Using this publicly-owned artery with its right of ways to squeeze or displace the original road and add a toll road is illegal. If a new toll road is to be added, then do it along another right-of-way. (5) Consider constructing overpasses for the E-W intersecting roads, which have less lanes, rather than N-S 281 with 6+ lanes. For example, Evans road overpass only needs 4 lanes, so the cost of a new overpass for 4 lanes is less than one for 6 lanes. There are other simple and obvious ways (such as the Super Street concept) to lower the cost of the project. (6) I didn't see much about the 281/1604 interchange project. Where can I find it and when will construction start? How will it impact traffic flow? (7) Why isn't the widening of Bulverde Road considered in this plan? It is overcrowded and needs an improved interchange at Evans Road and 1604 Loop. Since it runs parallel to 281, its traffic flow greatly affects 281. (8) It is also time to add lanes to 1604. When will that happen and will it be tolled? Look forward to receiving a reply to this email and attending the next public meeting.</p> | Email | 2, 4, 18, 15, 19 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 80 | <p>Please accept the following brief comments regarding preliminary alternatives and other issues concerning the US 281 EIS process. A Single, Comprehensive EIS for US 281/Loop 1604 As we have commented in the 1604 EIS process (and as has been argued in an ongoing lawsuit) we would again urge the lead agencies to prepare a single, comprehensive EIS for US 281/Loop 1604 instead of separate EISs for US 281 and Loop 1604. The current approach of separate EISs is duplicative, confusing, wasteful, and simply not warranted in light of the common financing, environmental constraints, timing, and coordination of 281 and 1604. For many years now, US 281/Loop 1604 has been planned as one project. There is no principled reason for separating the study of 281 and 1604, and such an arbitrary division of what is one project will likely result in a deficient analysis of alternatives, under-evaluation of impacts (especially cumulative), and unsatisfactory mitigation. Now more than ever, it is essential that government entities take a big-picture look at transportation solutions that will work within the environmental constraints of the northern San Antonio / northern Bexar County region. Analyzing the US 281/Loop 1604 project in one EIS is critically important for consideration of regional, sustainable, long-term transportation solutions that accord with the environmentally-sensitive context of the area—a context that includes the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone, extensive habitat for the endangered Golden-Cheeked Warbler, and extensive habitat for endangered Bexar County karst invertebrates. By focusing on the 281 corridor in isolation, or limiting the consideration of alternatives to primarily roadway expansion projects on US 281 (as discussed below), the Alamo RMA cannot satisfy NEPA. Purpose and Need Too Narrow in Several Respects Under NEPA, it is critical that an agency avoid formulating a purpose and need statement that is so narrow as to "define competing 'reasonable alternatives' out of consideration (and even out of existence)", <i>Simmons v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</i>, 120 F.3d 664 (7th Cir. 1997). As the 10th Circuit explained in another case, "if the purposes and needs of the Project were so narrowly construed as to mandate the extra capacity only at 11400 South, we would conclude that such a narrow definition would be contrary to the mandates of NEPA." <i>Davis v. Mineta</i>, 302 F.3d 1104, 1119-20 (10th Cir. 2002). Several of the Alamo RMA's suggested objectives accompanying the proposed purpose are so narrow as to mandate only one type of alternative: expansion of the US 281 roadway. The objectives focus excessively on roadway-based improvements by using language such as: 1) "provide additional capacity" 2) "Increase travel speeds" and 3) "maintain and/improve access to adjacent land uses" These elements should be removed so as to not rule out consideration of non-roadway based improvements. There are many ways to reduce congestion on US 281 that do not involve expanding the roadway or increasing travel speeds, yet the current language in the objectives would seem to favor a roadway expansion on US 281 above anything else. Maintaining or improving access to adjacent land uses, as one of the suggested objectives states, is especially problematic because it will force the selection of alternatives with continuous frontage roads and exclude</p> | Email | Specific Response see Section 5.2 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 80, Cont. | <p>reasonable alternatives. Buying access rights, for example, is routinely done by transportation agencies across the country to manage access, reduce congestion, and improve safety without building continuous frontage roads. Yet the Alamo RMA's objective of maintaining or improving access to adjacent land uses would necessitate continuous frontage roads (which are environmentally destructive and which research has shown to be associated with several adverse socioeconomic effects). This element should be removed.</p> <p>Necessity of Considering Peak Travel Demand Strategies in Combination with other Alternatives In developing reasonable alternatives, it is essential to keep in mind that NEPA requires agencies to consider combinations of alternatives rather than just various measures in isolation. In one of the cases cited above, the 10th Circuit found a NEPA study deficient for reasons that included the following: "The EA/4(f) rejected these options because, standing alone, they would not meet the purpose and need of the Project. However, no effort was made to consider TSM and mass transit together and/or in conjunction with alternative road expansion as a means of meeting Project goals. This represents one of the most egregious shortfalls of the EA." <i>Davis v. Mineta</i>, 302 F.3d 1104, 1121-22. As required by NEPA, we hope that the list of preliminary alternatives presented at the November 17th meeting will be considered in combination. For example, a project incorporating 1) Transportation System Management (TSM) & Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures, 2) mass transit, 3) strategic grade separations, with limited roadway expansion to accommodate exits and entrances, and 4) purchase of access rights, could do a lot to address 3 congestion on US 281 if not reduce it entirely. By considering these options in combination with other alternatives, an expensive multi-lane expansion on US 281 could be minimized and possibly avoided altogether. Because multi-lane roadway expansions will certainly induce additional traffic and growth along US 281, thereby aggravating congestion, we recommend that TSM/TDM measures, HOV lanes, and mass transit should be a part of any preferred project for US 281. In the long-run, managing and reducing peak travel demand will be the only way to achieve an economically and environmentally sustainable transportation solution for US 281. In addition to the TSM and TDM measures mentioned in the preliminary alternatives, we would also strongly recommend consideration of reversible lanes, which has been shown to be an effective method of managing peak travel demand in other cities. Reversible lanes are not mentioned in the preliminary alternatives and they should be a part of the development of reasonable alternatives. Cooperating Agencies From the materials handed out at the November 17th meeting, it is still unclear as to who the cooperating agencies are for the US 281 EIS process. The materials only have a catch-all category of participating/cooperating agencies. We would again urge the lead agencies in this EIS process to work as closely as possible with the Edwards Aquifer Authority, the U.S. Army at Camp Bullis, and VIA such that these agencies are designated both cooperating and participating. As explained in our previous comments, these agencies have special expertise that requires</p> | | |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 80, Cont. | their involvement as cooperating agencies in this EIS process in order to comply with NEPA. | | |
| 81 | #10; Complete item #10 ASAP with north & south elevated ramps to 1604 east & west. "stop the delays." | Fax | 2, 19 |
| 82 | I was very disappointed to read in the newspaper about the outcome of the last meeting regarding the changes concerning the 281 Expressway. It seems to me the Board members decided upon themselves to vote in favor of a toll road in the spite of the opinion of the people attending the meeting. I hope it was not for financial or political reasons that it was done. I disagree very strongly about the building of a Toll Road that in my opinion is not going to solve the traffic congestion at all and is going to benefit a small group of people including Governor Perry, which seems to be very much in favor of it. In my previous letter to you I recommended the elimination of the traffic lights located north of 1604 and the building of overpasses at the intersections, just like we have them on the south side of 1604. It was a big mistake when somebody decided to install traffic lights (3) on a wide road, where a large amount of cars travel every day at a high speed (between 60 and 70 miles per hour) and have to come all of a sudden to a complete stop, because of the lights. I hope you listen to the public's opinion. I believe the public should vote on this issue. Otherwise, I wish you a lot of luck. | Fax | 2, 4, 7 |
| 83 | I think way too much money was spent on all material handed out today (pages and pages!) & furthermore, the objectives didn't seem to "jive" with the purposes; most at table felt they were in isolation or rather, separated from the main issue: "toll" or "not to toll." The commissioners, those on the transportation committee, take time to have these meetings, but then they don't heed the will of the people; they simply go along with their original, obvious goal to construct toll roads! The majority of the people do not want toll roads! | Mail | 1, 4, 16 |
| 84 | My wife and I would be in favor of any solution except toll roads. | Mail | Comment Noted |
| 85 | No!!!!!!! Toll Roads adequate sound barriers | Website | 4, 17 |
| 86 | Heavy traffic along 281 north of 1604 is enough reason to not shop in that area. I really enjoy the amenities provided, but it's almost not worth the hassle of sitting in traffic. I propose that overpasses only would help the flow of traffic tremendously but only temporarily. Growth in the area is exponential, so I believe overpasses with a plan to expand the amount of lanes would be a great solution to the problem. | Website | Comment Noted |
| 87 | I strongly believe any form of toll collection will have a serious negative impact on the environment and quality of life for all citizens of northern San Antonio. I strongly oppose any form of toll collection system on US 281. | Website | 4 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 88 | My wife and I oppose any proposed toll road plans for the 281 corridor. We will support any and all efforts to stop placement of a toll road. We will support grass roots efforts to promote protest and resistance to the toll road concept. The toll road is a bad idea and if developed we plan to sell our home and business and move to another city. | Website | Comment Noted |
| 89 | We need to increase the lanes of traffic for 281 and they should be paid for by the gas taxes we already pay. Public transportation will not work because the majority of those traveling on 281 do not go near where public transportation covers us. We can expand the road without impacting water, pollution or anything else. Those pushing for public transportation do not understand the negatives of buses or various train approaches. These options do not make sense in reducing traffic or in real reductions in pollution! Stop focusing on public transportation and work to get the road expanded, now! We don't want toll roads; we want the TxDOT to provide funds that they collect from us every day with our gas taxes! Stop the other proposals now! | Website | 4, 9, 14 |
| 90 | Thank you for the information you have provided to keep the residents in the community affected by the 281 challenges. I received the large colorful newsletter, "The 4-1-1 on 281," and found it very beneficial. I look forward to attending future meetings and receiving updated newsletters. | Website | Comment Noted |
| 91 | Objectives and alternatives not intuitive to general public. Difficult to understand & interpret - would likely lead to invalid opinions. | Meeting Evaluation | 1, 13 |
| 92 | I'm not sure if this session was a good use of my time. The forms used were not easy to understand or what was really meant on each question. | Meeting Evaluation | 16 |
| 93 | This would be a great activity if it counted for everything. This process just goes on and on. | Meeting Evaluation | 19 |
| 94 | Small groups need to focus on the question and answers and not as much off topic discussion. Lots of time spent on "what to do" - time to make a choice and starting work on it immediately is important - use tax dollars wisely. | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 95 | Limit discussion despite requests of members! | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 96 | No toll roads no HOV lanes no HOT lanes no express lanes build the overpasses both directions | Meeting Evaluation | 2, 4, 10 |
| 97 | Too much focus on HOV + HOT lanes, since they don't encourage maximum usage of lanes. | Meeting Evaluation | 2, 4, 10 |
| 98 | We spent too much time trying to define what the terminology. Sounds like Alamo RMA was pushing their own agenda. | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 99 | I am highly opposed to tolls! Lived in Chicago so I know what living with them is like! | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 100 | No Tolls! | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 101 | Format of streets was limited. | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 102 | We want and need a non-toll option. Need to be better stewards of tax dollars. Aquifer impact. | Meeting Evaluation | 4, 3 |
| 103 | Would've liked an open forum Q&A but this was my first meeting, usually out of town for work, have lots of questions. Forum was very specific to the feedback needed. | Meeting Evaluation | 16 |
| 104 | A light rail system from Bulverde to downtown would be very helpful. A couple park & rides between Bulverde & 1604 and perhaps one more between 1604 & Bitters Road could work. | Meeting Evaluation | 2, 10 |
| 105 | Include crash rate (on 281 vs. state rate) in animated slideshow. Include travel time averages | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 106 | Display - Station #2 erroneous -bridges & lanes should have been added years ago. Item #10 Part 2 is the most desirable. | Meeting Evaluation | 2 |
| 107 | Location - Poor parking situation. I hope this is not just a feel good exercise for the community. Get politics out of the equation. Use highway fund for what they were intended. | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 108 | Location-too much vague "fluff" not enough detail; display-surprised staffers did not always have answers; Groups-not what we wanted to talk about. The question is whether these meetings really accomplish anything or whether they are "window dressing" to make the citizens feel better but are ignored in the real plans. | Meeting Evaluation | 13, 16 |
| 109 | Don't toll Texas! | Meeting Evaluation | 4 |
| 110 | Increase gas tax and remove education from gas tax. Replace education money with small sales tax increase. | Meeting Evaluation | 4, 9 |
| 111 | Seems very slanted toward skewing opinion for tolls. Groups: No Clear Objective. Take politics out! Get rid of appointed people on the MPO/RMA. They do not represent "we the people." And they are total political animals. P.S. Just follow the money. | Meeting Evaluation | 1, 4 |
| 112 | No Tolls - unless every road in every part of the city must be included to now pay for our road we already paid for theirs!!! | Meeting Evaluation | 4, 9 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 113 | Use bigger signs to advertise | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 114 | It's time for additional lanes, and flyovers on highway 281 - without tolls | Meeting Evaluation | 2 |
| 115 | I find the wording of this "comment card"/"meeting evaluation" difficult to understand. For example - the "fatally flawed" section. | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 116 | Meeting format is too time consuming. | Meeting Evaluation | 16 |
| 117 | Location - Great but hard to find; Groups- confusing; #12 "implement policy changes and growth management" is absurdly intrusive in terms of government. It is already fatally flawed at the outset. | Meeting Evaluation | 10, 16 |
| 118 | Many people still think an environmental impact statement has only to do with endangered species. Having the groups report out was not useful - even if they bring up important ideas, we have no opportunity to do anything with that info. Many people wanted to focus on tolls or costs. They didn't understand that we were simply evaluating alternatives and the other stuff will be addressed later. Having people who are experts intimately involved with the project give the briefings is probably a mistake - you need to have people with the same perspective as the audience do the talking. | Meeting Evaluation | 16 |
| 119 | The food was super. Beer would have been even better. | Meeting Evaluation | Comment Noted |
| 120 | Part 1 - purpose and objectives somewhat confusing. Part 2- need to present toll and non-toll as alternatives, i.e. 10a. Non-Toll, 10b Toll. Whole process too complex (but understand it is driven by EIS structure. | Meeting Evaluation | 1, 2, 4, 16 |
| 121 | Display: irrelevant photos/misleading shots; Comment: Complete conflict of interest for personal monetary gain. Not listening to private citizens. Smoke screen to benefit sale to H.B. Zachary for toll roads - Ditch the walkers & bikes. | Meeting Evaluation | 22 |
| 122 | Try very hard to reduce the EIS time so we can get started sooner. | Meeting Evaluation | 19 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 123 | <p>Okay. Basically, I don't think that we need to have toll roads, especially at this point. Obama, George -- Our country is already in such a recession, and it looks like they're trying to bankrupt the whole United States. And with people unemployed, if we're going to go into a depression or whatever is going to happen, people certainly cannot afford toll roads. We had the money. The taxpayers have given the money to expand 281, as well as 1604, but it's because of government corruption, non-responsibility of -- you know, irresponsible fiscal use of the money. You know, waste -- government waste. You know, corruption is the only -- you know, that's the reason that we don't have the money, is because the people who are supposed to be watching over and taking care of that money spent it on other things. And so we've got the money. So whoever spent it, pay it back to the taxpayers and use their own millions of dollars since they've spent ours. But we cannot afford to have any kind of toll roads. We need to expand 281, but we certainly don't need any 20-lane road. Give me a break. You know, how asinine is that? I think whenever you get into government, some way you lose all common sense and everything is only on me, me, me, and how can I get some money and how can this benefit me. But, you know, they're supposed to be working for the taxpayers that pay their salaries, and we paid the money for the expansion of roads. We certainly do not need 20 lanes and we do not need a toll -- toll roads. We've already paid for it. Put the money where it's supposed to be used for and you wouldn't have these problems.</p> | Court Reporter | 4, 9, 12 |
| 124 | <p>What we want done on 281 is for the overpasses to be put in what we have paid for. Myself, my family, my friends that live in this area, have not paid taxes for last 25, 30 years to have a toll road put in. I'd like to know how is it possible that Comal County finds the resources to put their overpass in at 1863 and 281 ten years ago? Maybe our politicians in Bexar County should call the officials in Comal County and find out how they did it because, apparently, they have knowledge and information resources that we, in Bexar County, do not have. Also, we're being told that there is just not enough money to fix all the roads the way they need to be when, I think, it's a matter of prioritizing. It appears that TxDOT has chosen to spread the money out to areas that really don't need attention right now as in 37 and Military Highway where they're redoing the interchange. That could have been put off until 281, for example, is finished. We want the overpasses that we paid for, nothing else.</p> | Court Reporter | 9, 4 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 125 | I have a little bit of a concern about the format tonight. I think that it was confusing to at least some people. I know that some of the people at our table were very confused by the objectives and purpose. They weren't clear. Nobody really understood how to fill out those forms. The overall format of having some group interaction, I think, was good, but the specific forms that we were given were not that useful. There are too many alternatives and -- and the alternatives did not make clear whether it was a tolled or un-tolled option. It looks to me like they're trying to stealth the toll option in and there was nobody at our table that wants to see the road tolled. I don't think there was anybody here tonight that wants to see the road tolled for any of numerous reasons. We should have the funds to build the road with overpasses and frontage roads in a non tolled configuration. The money was there. Where did it go? Let's just do it the way it was supposed to be done. | Court Reporter | 1, 4, 11, 13, 16 |
| 126 | I was very concerned with the format of tonight's meeting, especially on the purpose and -- the objectives and the purposes. I found the wording very ambiguous, difficult to understand. You didn't know if you were voting for something that you were against. Excuse me. Voting is not the right word. You didn't know if your opinion was -- if you were judging something that you were against and if you were actually being for it. It was just very difficult to understand the format of tonight's meeting. In addition, as it pertains to the MPO 2035 document that's steering this EIS, they didn't mention anything about diminished growth of single-occupancy vehicles. Today, 86,000 cars go over 281, whereas, the toll road would need 200,000 cars a day just to break even. Another thing I found inconsistent in the documents -- in the working documents here is it is currently illegal in the state of Texas to encourage public-private partnerships. In today's documents and in the MPO 2035, they are encouraging public-private partnerships and, once again, they are illegal. In addition to that, I would like to know what the Early Action Compact is. I would like to know what the Texas State Data Center is and I would also like to know why is it that ACOG gets to approve population forecasts. I would also like to see our state demographer present at the next EIS meeting. | Court Reporter | Specific Response see Section 5.2 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 127 | <p>I live in the Northwood Hills Subdivision, which is located on the corner of Bulverde and Evans Road. The Bulverde-Evans Project addresses the run-off water from Bulverde and the fact that it is going to be treated before it enters the aquifer. I'm assuming that 281 run-off will also be that way. But my concern is in that subdivision, Northwood Hills, it is served -- the whole subdivision is serviced by septic tanks. Since '98, those -- a number of those septic tanks have been flooded and, of late, it doesn't take but about three inches of rain to go over the lateral lines, over the holding tanks and that water is -- the purification of that water has not been addressed that I know of in any of the meetings. I've been to several meetings. My question would be when and how would that water be treated if it's -- maybe they -- somebody don't even know it's happening, but I can show you where my lateral lines are. It gets inundated every time it floods. I've lived at that house 37 years. I've never had an opportunity or a reason to sump the septic tank, sump out the septic tank, clean out the septic tank, because Mother Nature does it for me on a regular basis. And this putrid water is going downstream and somewhere down there it enters the purified water that comes off of the Bulverde Road Project, 281 project. It all ends up in the aquifer, but nobody wants to address the septic tanks being flooded in the subdivision of Northwood Hills. And that is my concern. And I would like to have that addressed or be contacted or I would be glad to visit someone or have a representative come out. I'll do a walk-through on my property, show exactly what happens when the flood comes and it comes on a regular basis now.</p> <p>First off, I just want to say that, based on what was covered tonight, that the use of my time coming to this event was not worthwhile. Also wanted to go on record that the -- the sheets that were used, the worksheets, much of what was written on and how it was written was confusing and hard to understand what it means to agree or disagree, particularly on the comment card. The -- the proposed and alternative worksheet, much of it was confusing what it actually was being proposed on some of these options. When it gets down to it, what will fix 90% of our problem, at least, is simply putting the overpasses that we have paid for and let's stop this nonsense and just get it done and stop holding us hostage on U. 281 north.</p> | Court Reporter | Specific Response see Section 5.2 |
| 128 | | Court Reporter | 2, 11, 13, 16, 19 |

| Reference # (Please see Appendix E to search for a comment by name and the associated Reference #). | Comment | Comment Source | Response (Please use this number to find the associated comment response immediately below this table in Section 5.) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 129 | <p>I have quite a few concerns about the process. I believe the -- the process should be a complete open forum. In other words, an open forum is where you have the presentation and then the public makes comments where everybody hears the comments at one time. In other words, that's an open forum. I've been to Williamsburg, VA, and they explained in the 1700s how an open forum worked and it worked very well. This was not an open forum. This was, basically, a closed forum. So you don't -- you don't get the reaction with the people present if you're in too small groups. So the process, I don't think, it -- personally, I don't think was a good one. What the people want and what the people need is what they -- what the people can afford. They already pay their gas tax and the registration fees. These fees should be used for everyone. It should not be discriminated against. If they use these fees and funds in a toll road, it discriminates against a lot of people because a lot of people can't afford to pay extra in addition to their gas tax and registration fees and the other taxes they already pay and on a right-of-way that they have already paid for years and years ago. Now they want to convert that right-of-way to a toll road? This is just wrong. We should never have any kind of law that allows that to happen. That is just -- That's, basically, very fraudulent act of the people in power and the politicians to ride over the people because take a right-of-way that they've paid for and then turn it into a toll road? That's just wrong. What we need is we need to make sure that the culture of San Antonio is not destroyed. This culture is very open, very friendly. We welcome everyone to this community. A toll road would be very, very unfriendly to our tourism business, to our military personnel that -- that are stationed here and our medical-needs people who work and come here for medical services. And now we're going to put toll roads all over San Antonio? Or have a two-tiered system where the rich can afford to get on a nice road and then people who don't have those means are stuck in traffic or weaving through neighborhoods and hurting the neighborhood streets, causing those costs to go up. This is just not the way to have a good transportation system. We need roads. We've got our cars, we've got our trucks, but we don't have a road to use them on. We need a freeway out here on 281 and we need overpasses that everybody can use and get it done. These special interests that want these toll roads and people who say that we don't have any money, we're going to have to all work together to get the money to build a freeway that the people want.</p> | Court Reporter | 4, 9, 16, 18, 21 |

5.0 OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

5.1. General Comments and Responses

As noted in **Section 4**, if a comment was submitted multiple times or several comments were related in topic, the comments were grouped logically and a general response and associated **Response #** was given to each comment in **Table 6**. Each group of comments is labeled as **General Comment** with the associated **General Response** immediately following.

General Comment 1: The project objectives are very broad and confusing. Why do they not include consideration for finding a low cost option, timeliness or funding alternatives? They do not address the main issue, “we do not want tolls”.

General Response 1: The purpose of US 281 corridor improvements is to improve mobility and accessibility, enhance safety, and improve community quality of life.

Goals and objectives for US 281 were derived from the evaluation of the problems and needs identified by previous studies, from public input during the scoping process, and from meetings with the US 281 Community Advisory Committee and the US 281 Peer Technical Review Committee. The US 281 Community Advisory Committee is composed of representatives of residential, business and other stakeholders’ organizations, including civic, community and environmental groups, education institutions and businesses located within San Antonio. The US 281 Peer Technical Review Committee is composed of representatives from the agencies and local governments that have a role in funding, permitting, and/or planning/implementing proposed transportation improvements in Bexar County. The goals and objectives were established to help define the direction and character of the EIS and used as a point of reference during the development and evaluation of potential alternatives to determine how well each potential alternative performed.

Address Growth

- Satisfy travel demand
- Be consistent with local and regional plans and policies
- Develop facilities for multi-modal transportation
- Allow for future high capacity transit

Improve Functionality

- Reduce travel time and increase travel speeds
- Reduce conflicts between local and through traffic
- Improve access to adjacent property

Improve Safety

- Reduce accident rates

Improve Quality of Life

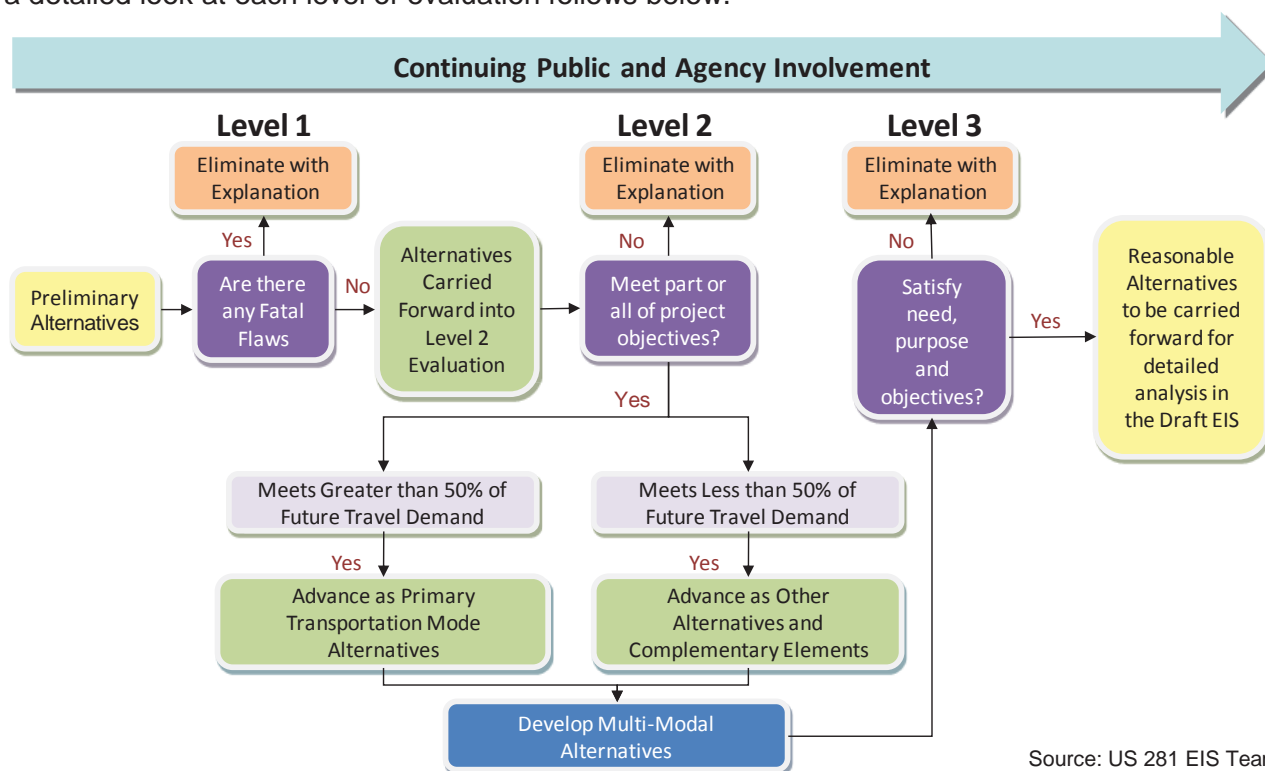
- Avoid/minimize adverse social & economic impacts
- Avoid/minimize water quality impacts
- Avoid/minimize impacts to wildlife habitat
- Enhance air quality
- Minimize noise impacts
- Maximize use of non-toll funds
- Provide for aesthetics and landscaping
- Provide facilities for walking & biking

One of the objectives is to “maximize the use of non-toll funds”. The intention behind this goal is to consider ways to bring as much non-tolled funding as possible to US 281. Timeliness was not included as an objective in an effort to have a broad range of goals that do not favor one funding option over another.

General Comment 2: Why were Heavy Rail, Commuter Rail, Monorail, Automated Guideway Transit, Personal Rapid Transit and New Parallel Corridor eliminated for further consideration? Which alternatives were carried forward in the process and evaluated in more detail?

General Response 2: The preliminary range of alternatives represented a variety of transportation improvement strategies to meet the Need and Purpose of the project: Address Growth, Improve Safety, Improve Functionality, and Enhance Quality of Life. According to NEPA, the Alamo RMA must consider the full range of Reasonable Alternatives, which are defined as those that meet the need and purpose. This list of preliminary alternatives was refined based on input received from participating and cooperating agencies, stakeholder groups, and the public as well as transportation professionals.

The preliminary range of alternatives was evaluated through a three-level screening process. Level 1 evaluation conducted a “fatal flaw” analysis of all of the preliminary alternatives using qualitative criteria, and eliminated alternatives that did not meet them. The remaining alternatives were carried forward to Level 2. The Level 2 evaluation included a more detailed modal analysis based on a series of decision points that resulted in an alternative either being eliminated or categorized as a primary alternative, other alternative or complementary element. Primary and other alternatives were packaged to form Multi-Modal Alternatives for Level 3 evaluation. Level 3 screening used detailed quantitative and qualitative criteria based on the goals and objectives identified in the Need and Purpose statement to compare each alternative against the No-Build benchmark. Results of the Level 3 evaluation either eliminated the alternative or advanced it to be combined with the complementary elements for additional analysis in the Draft EIS. An overview of the evaluation process is shown in **Figure 2** and more a detailed look at each level of evaluation follows below.



Source: US 281 EIS Team, 2010

Figure 2 - Overview of Alternatives Evaluation Process

Level 1 evaluation used a “fatal flaw qualitative analysis method that resulted in a pass/fail decision for each of the Level 1 alternatives. The criteria for this level of analysis were grounded in the Need and Purpose for the project and are as follows:

- Is the alternative compatible with regional and/or corridor plans? – This question addressed the planned growth in the region and ensured that alternatives fit into the future vision for the corridor, such as *Mobility 2035* and VIA’s Comprehensive Long Range Plan.
- Is this a proven technology? – This question spoke to the functionality of the alternative for the US 281 project corridor by ensuring that it had been successfully implemented in other corridors similar to US 281.
- Does the alternative avoid major adverse social, economic and/or environmental impacts? – This criteria is tied to the quality of life component of the Need and Purpose statement.

All alternatives were evaluated on these three criteria. Alternatives that did not meet all three criteria of Level 1 evaluation consequently did not meet the objectives set out in the Need and Purpose and were therefore recommended for elimination. Those alternatives satisfying the three criteria were advanced to Level 2 evaluation. The No-Build Alternative was also advanced, per NEPA requirements. **Figure 3** illustrates the Level 1 evaluation process and the results of the “fatal flaw” analysis.

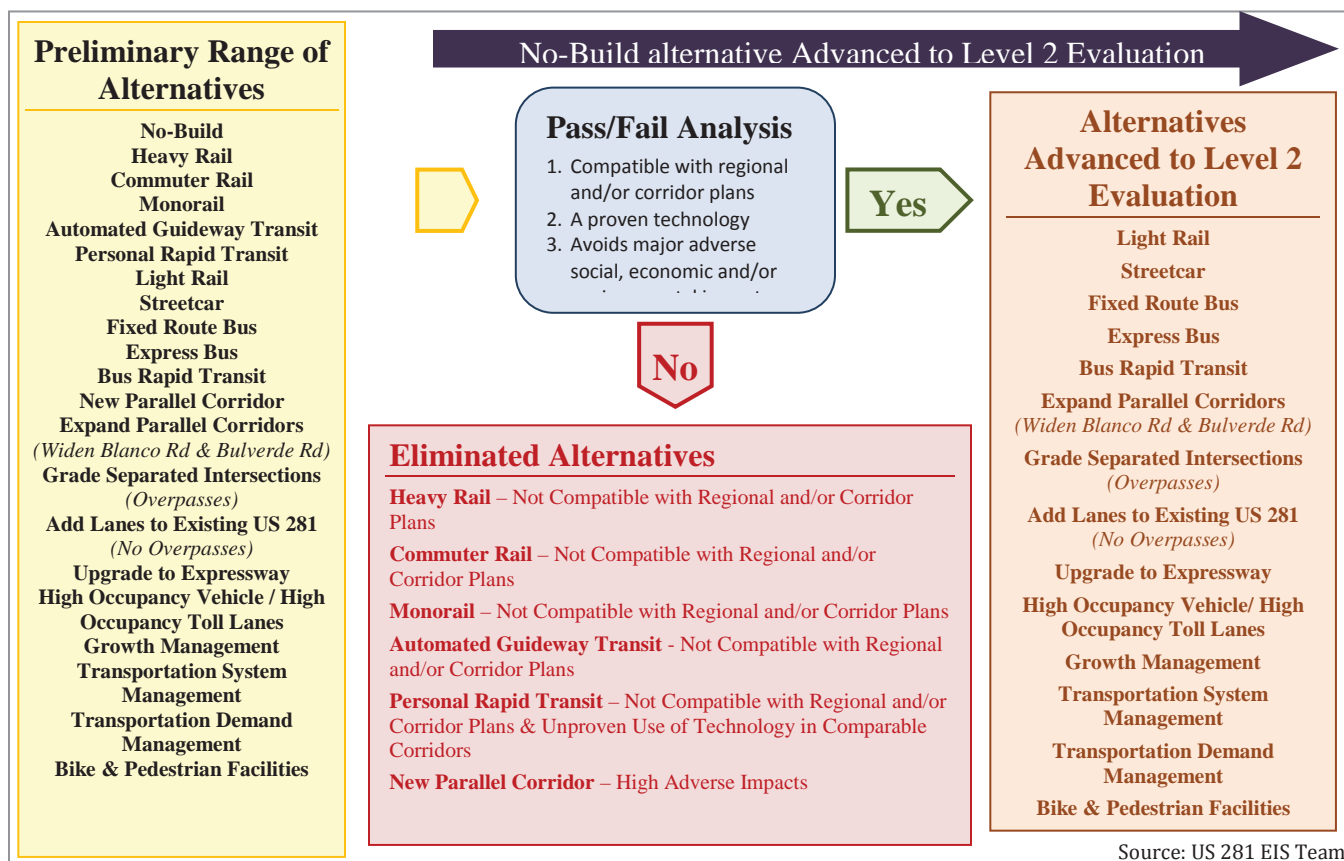


Figure 3 - Level 1 Evaluation Process and Results

Five transit alternatives and one highway alternative were eliminated as a result of the Level 1 analysis. The five transit alternatives included heavy rail, commuter rail, monorail, Automated Guideway Transit, and Personal Rapid Transit. These transit alternatives were removed from further consideration because they were not compatible with the regional and/or corridor plans. In addition, Personal Rapid Transit was eliminated because it did not have a proven track record for implementation in a context similar to the US 281 project corridor. Among the highway alternatives, the new parallel corridor alternative was eliminated because the area is heavily developed with residential and commercial property on both sides of US 281. A new parallel corridor on either side of US 281 would potentially have high adverse social, economic and/or environmental impacts.

General Comment 3: I'm concerned about impacts to the Edwards Aquifer and my drinking water, how can we improve US 281 with less of an impact to the aquifer?

General Response 3: The Corridor lies within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone as defined by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Corridor transportation improvements must comply with the rules set forth by Texas Commission on Environmental Quality pertaining to development and stormwater quality. The rules state that all storm water runoff must be treated by stormwater facilities to remove a certain percentage of the pollutant load contained within the runoff. Texas Commission on Environmental Quality refers to these pollutants as Total Suspended Solids.

The US 281 EIS Team is considering some innovative water quality and stormwater management approaches for possible application in the US 281 Project Corridor. Stormwater treatment facilities are traditionally comprised of mostly large, unsightly ponds that meet the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality requirements, but take up large amounts of valuable land and require heavy maintenance in order to maintain the aesthetics of the pond as well as its function. Most roadways in Texas manage or treat stormwater with collection inlets that convey the stormwater in pipes or box culverts, ultimately releasing it in large, "end-of-pipe" facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas. Conventional construction and storm drain system design typically alter natural hydrologic (water movement) functions by discouraging infiltration and groundwater recharge and increasing runoff flow rate and total runoff volume. The increased runoff flow rates are addressed with detention basins, but they do not address the additional runoff volume. It is this additional runoff volume that used to soak into the ground that is now on the surface and which ultimately has a negative impact on the downstream environmental conditions. The conventional methods are generally unattractive depositories for trash and are oftentimes out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood and community.

Alternatively, "distributed" water quality and stormwater management techniques address the hydrologic changes of impervious cover near the location of the precipitation impact (as opposed to the "end-of-pipe" methods) and make use of a multitude of several smaller Integrated Management Practices located throughout the watershed. Some technical journals refer to these techniques as Low Impact Development. These methods address water quality, runoff rate and runoff volume. Through the use of vegetation, soil amendments and grading they provide more distributed "storage" within the watershed which decreases the downstream impact of an increased impervious cover. These methods focus on Landscape Integrated Design into the overall stormwater management plan. The distributed methods tend to provide a better "base flow" condition to the receiving waterways (duration and frequency) which typically helps the overall habitat value.

With the recent innovations of distributed Integrated Management Practices technology and methodology, new stormwater facilities are being used that meet the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality requirements for Total Suspended Solids removal and also provide a much gentler and aesthetically pleasing environment. These methods have also been approved to be used within the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. These facilities typically require traditional landscape maintenance which would be performed regularly anyway.

Low Impact Development is a basic principle that is modeled after nature with the goal to manage rainfall/runoff at the source using uniformly distributed and dispersed, small, cost-effective stormwater structures and landscape features. Low Impact Development's goal is to mimic the predevelopment hydrology of a project site or property by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source. Low Impact Development relies heavily on smarter and advanced technologies because the emphasis of Low Impact Development is to make the land, a project or development sits on, act hydrologically like it was undeveloped land. These sustainable site design techniques also help to minimize or eliminate the need and cost for landscape irrigation.

Low Impact Development designs move the design focus away from a "collect, convey and discharge the runoff as quickly as you can" strategy to one that focuses on "slow down, soak up and spread out" the runoff. This treats stormwater near the precipitation impact instead of passing it onto another downstream parcel of land or stormwater network. The strategy includes, among other things, infiltration ("soak away") trenches, open vegetated road swales, vegetated bio-filtration areas, pretreatment media vaults, permeable friction pavement, permeable sidewalks, oil/grease removal, urban forest landscape practices, and soil amendments that store and filter runoff. Typically, this strategy is accomplished at an equivalent or reduced cost over conventional stormwater collection and treatment, and provides increased benefits to communities and the environment. Each Integrated Management Practice has certain strong points or "performance capabilities" that are attractive; some function well in controlling the runoff volume, others help with regulating the peak flow rate, and others help with water quality. The new Low Impact Development strategy is also a great way to "green up" a community, using vegetation to make our communities more attractive.

Simply put, distributed water quality and innovative stormwater management techniques help keep rainwater on site, slowly releasing it, and allowing for natural physical, chemical and biological processes to do their job while avoiding environmental impacts and expensive treatment systems. The associated vegetation and landscaping also offers human "quality of life" opportunities by greening the US 281 Project Corridor, thus contributing to livability, value, sense of place, and aesthetics.

General Comment 4: What funding options are being considered for improvements to US 281?

General Response 4: US 281 from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive is an integral part of the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization (SA-BC MPO) *Mobility 2035*, which is the region's long-range metropolitan transportation plan (MTP). The MTP was adopted by the SA-BC MPO on December 7, 2009 and updated in October 2011. The project is included in *Mobility 2035* as a six-lane toll expressway with non-toll outer lanes (i.e., frontage roads) and non-toll direct connector ramps at the northern half of the US 281 interchange with Loop 1604. The project is shown in *Mobility 2035* to have an estimated cost of \$521,513,685 in year-of-expenditure (YOE) dollars.

The MTP allocates Category 2 (Texas Mobility Fund) funding to this project in Fiscal Years (FY) 2013 through 2020 in the total amount of \$112,220,000. Other sources of funding for this project identified in the MTP include bonds and federal loans. Additional non-toll sources of funding may be allocated to US 281 improvements by the MPO's governing body, the Transportation Policy Board, in future MTP updates or amendments. The project is also included in the FY 2011 – 2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP was unanimously approved by the MPO Transportation Policy Board at their meeting on May 17, 2010. The project was subsequently included in the FY 2011-2014 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TxDOT, September, 2010). This document is available at <http://www.sametroplan.org/Plans/TIP/tip.html>.

Both non-toll and toll funding and/or financing options for US 281 transportation improvements will be considered during the EIS process. The EIS must be consistent with the MTP in order to advance the project to a Record of Decision (ROD) from FHWA. If the recommendation for the Selected Alternative is different from what is included in the MTP, there are two options to ensure consistency: (1) an amendment to the MTP that reflects the recommendation for the Selected Alternative or (2) the recommendation for the Selected Alternative would have to be revisited within the EIS.

Toll roads have the potential to disproportionately affect low-income populations because a low-income person would have to use a larger percentage of his or her income to pay tolls when compared to the general population, given the same level of use. The Expressway Alternative and the Elevated Expressway Alternative are being considered for non-toll, toll and managed lane options. Therefore, the US 281 EIS will analyze the potential effects on low-income populations resulting from operation of US 281 with toll and/or managed lanes. The EIS also gives consideration to the toll collection system in terms of right-of-way requirements, how tolls would be collected, and the Alamo RMA's toll policies and procedures.

General Comment 5: This meeting focused on the range of preliminary alternatives and how these alternatives would be evaluated in the alternatives screening process. Why does the evaluation of environmental impacts occur later in the process?

General Response 5: The preliminary range of alternatives was evaluated through a three-level screening process. Level 1 evaluation conducted a "fatal flaw" analysis of all of the preliminary alternatives using qualitative criteria, and eliminated alternatives that did not meet them. This public scoping meeting (November 17, 2009) focused on the results from Level 1 evaluation process. The next public meeting occurred on April 29, 2010 and presented the results of the Level 2 and Level 3 evaluation process.

The alternatives screening and evaluation process is performed at a conceptual level of detail in an effort to narrow down the options before the design of the roadway. In order to determine environmental impacts, a higher level of design is necessary. As part of Level 3 analysis, an overview assessment of environmental factors was prepared for the purpose of comparing and screening the alternatives. The information presented below is preliminary and subject to change based on field surveys and additional engineering during preparation of the Draft EIS. Potential impacts resulting from solutions to access issues, such as frontage roads, backage roads, the purchase of access right and/or any combination of these have not been included in the below data. The environmental factors presented below will be explored in greater detail for the reasonable alternatives that have been identified through the screening process.

Right-of-Way (ROW)

All Level 3 alternatives were compared based on the number of additional acres of ROW that would be required to implement each alternative, as well as the total number of ROW acres that fall within the footprint of each alternative.

Karst Zones

Karst is a geologic feature that is shaped by the dissolution of soluble rock (i.e. limestone) and is characterized by underground openings and caves. Karst features are important to evaluate because they are potential habitat for endangered species. Karst is categorized in zones from 1 to 4. Zone 1 is known to be home to listed species and Zone 2 has high potential to be prime habitat for listed species. Zones 3 and 4 have little potential to be prime habitat. All Level 3 alternatives were compared based on the total number of acres of ROW in Karst Zones 1 & 2.

Karst Invertebrate Critical Habitat

The distance from known karst invertebrate critical habitat for each Level 3 alternative was evaluated. Past investigation of the karst geology within the project corridor reveals that critical karst invertebrate habitat has been surveyed and identified. Karst invertebrates are endemic to the region and are considered protected, endangered species.

Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone

The Edwards Aquifer is the primary source of drinking water for the larger metropolitan region of San Antonio. The recharge zone is a hydrogeological area where surface water enters the aquifer and replenishes its water supply. The number of acres of recharge zone under the footprint of each alternative was determined as mitigation factors must be considered to manage the water quality of roadway runoff.

Displacements

As all build alternatives would require additional ROW, there is a potential that the land identified for the roadway improvement may have an existing residential or commercial use. Displacing residences and businesses requires legislative authority and legal compliance and may involve environmental justice considerations. As such, this criterion identified the number of residential and commercial parcels that would be impacted by each alternative.

Historic Properties

Properties that have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places have been surveyed and deemed to have architectural, historic and/or cultural value worthy of designation and protection. Based on previous surveys conducted in the project corridor, there are no properties listed within 150 feet of the ROW for any alternative considered for US 281 improvements.

Archaeological Resources

Central Texas and the San Antonio area have a rich history; therefore, the land in the project corridor has the potential to hold relics, structures, and other historic artifacts. Based on previous archaeological surveys, topography, geology, and hydrology, areas of high probability for archeological resources were determined for the project corridor. For each alternative, the number of acres with a high probability for archeological resources was identified within the ROW.

Wildlife Habitat

In terms of ecological succession, wooded habitats are the most developed and, therefore, have the potential to house a greater diversity of wildlife. In an effort to determine the impact that

each alternative might have on wildlife habitat, each alternative was evaluated based on how many acres of wooded land habitat would be included in the ROW.

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials sites are not compatible with roadways and the traveling public for safety reasons. This criterion counted the number of known hazardous material sites within the ROW footprints for each alternative.

Air Quality

According to the Federal Clean Air Act, vehicle emission levels must meet a designated standard in order to be in compliance. In anticipation of the future growth of the San Antonio metropolitan area, strategies must be considered that will maintain air quality, and ensure attainment of emission standards. As part of Level 3 screening, each alternative was evaluated based on its ability to reduce the emission of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) based on projected 2035 traffic demands compared to the No-Build.

Streams

Like wildlife habitat, streams provide a critical habitat for a diversity of life. In addition, the dynamic nature of waterways causes water levels in streams to rise and fall, and stream banks to change shape through erosion and deposition processes. Roadways that cross streams must be built to ensure safety of the infrastructure while minimizing impact to the waterway ecology. Level 3 screening identified the number of times each alternative crosses a stream, as well as the number of linear feet of stream that might be impacted at each crossing.

Traffic Noise

A change in roadway design can impact the perceived traffic noise. As defined by FHWA, Category B noise receivers include: parks, playgrounds, recreation areas, residential areas, hotels, motels, hospitals, churches, and schools. Level 3 screening located Category B noise receivers for each alternative. All receivers that were located with 500 feet of each alternative ROW were identified.

Floodplains

The Federal Emergency Management Agency uses the 100-year floodplain designation as a measure of safety risk associated with flooding. In general, development in the 100-year floodplain should be avoided. While roadways can be built within floodplains, they must accommodate the rise and fall of water during a flood event and consideration should be given to the impact construction may have on the shape and size of the floodplain. The Level 3 screening identified the number of acres of 100-year floodplain that would be potentially impacted for each alternative.

Impervious Cover

Impervious cover is an important environmental metric as it has a large impact on water movement and water quality. Roadway runoff can carry roadway contaminants into receiving waters if appropriate management techniques are not adequate. Level 3 screening identified the number of acres of impervious cover that would be added if the alternative was implemented as well as the total acreage of the impervious cover footprint for each alternative.

General Comment 6: One of the alternatives was to simply add lanes to US 281, how would this work?

General Response 6: Adding additional lanes on US 281 was considered because it would be an inexpensive way to add capacity. Unfortunately, adding an additional lane in each direction of travel would only increase capacity by about thirty-three (33) percent in the existing six lane roadway. Meanwhile, because of continued growth within the immediate area surrounding US 281 and in Comal County, traffic demand is expected to double by 2035.

Each additional lane added to the existing highway is likely to be less effective because of motorist's reluctance to use the middle lanes, since it's difficult at times getting to the outside lanes to exit the roadway. This is why few roadways, similar to the existing US 281 are constructed to more than six-lanes across.

On a broader note, simply widening US 281, as it is presently designed does nothing to improve safety, and as noted above only marginally improves capacity. Adding additional lanes on US 281 would not eliminate the conflicts created by at-grade intersections and driveways with the higher speed through lanes.

General Comment 7: Why can't we vote on how to improve US 281?

General Response 7: It is important to understand that commenting or providing input during the EIS process is not a vote on whether an action should take place or not. However, public input can influence the decisions made during this process. The NEPA requires that project decision makers be informed of the environmental consequences of their decisions.

General Comment 8: Could reversible lanes work on US 281?

General Response 8: Reversible lanes are a great way to cost-effectively solve congestion where there are heavy imbalances in peak hour traffic flows, and these strategies have been successfully employed in Dallas, Houston, and New York City. For this reason and based on public comment, they were evaluated as an improvement option on US 281.

Peak hour (or rush hour) traffic counts were collected, in February of 2010, in the morning and afternoon at a number of the US 281 intersections. Peak-hour, directional traffic flows were calculated on US 281 north and south of each of these locations in order to determine the direction and magnitude of these traffic flows. All of this information is summarized in the following table.

Table 7. Peak Hour Traffic Flow Characteristics

| Location of Traffic Count | Peak Period (Hour) | Southbound Peak Traffic | Northbound Peak Traffic | Directional Flow (%) |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| North of Marshall Road | 7 AM to 9 AM | 3,909 | 1,912 | 67/33 |
| | 4 PM to 6 PM | 2,772 | 4,139 | 40/60 |
| South of Encino Rio | 7 AM to 9 AM | 9,157 | 4,343 | 68/32 |
| | 4 PM to 6 PM | 5,154 | 6,523 | 44/56 |
| Average | 7 AM to 9 AM | 6,533 | 3,128 | 68/32 |
| | 4 PM to 6 PM | 3,963 | 5,331 | 43/57 |

Source: US 281 EIS Team 2010

While the morning rush hour does have a very heavy directional split to it (undoubtedly related to northern suburban commuters traveling to employment locations south of Loop 1604), the afternoon rush hour does not have a heavy directionality to it. Thus, in the morning peak, where twice as many vehicles travel southbound as northbound, special directional facilities could be helpful in moving the southbound traffic without adversely affecting the northbound traffic flows. But in the afternoon, there is only a very slight directional preference favoring the northbound movements back to the suburbs until one gets north of Marshall Road on US 281. Reversible lanes would not be helpful in such instances.

As a result, improvement alternatives that favor one direction over another (such as reversible lanes) on US 281 could only make sense if they reduced the infrastructure required during the morning peak (or rush hour). There could be no such benefit during the afternoon peak, so such an alternative would have to “do no harm” during that period. While possible, the cost effectiveness of such an alternative serving only a few hours of traffic a day suggests that such an investment might not be cost effective.

General Comment 9: I have already paid for US 281 improvements with my gas tax, but it has apparently been diverted to other areas besides Bexar County.

General Response 9: The collection and distribution of federal and state taxes to support transportation improvements are not tied to specific roadways or counties of origin. According to TxDOT's *Project Selection Process* (TxDOT Finance Division, Abridged Seventh Edition, November 2009), “Projects can be financed through a number of sources, including local funding, state funding (revenue from motor fuel taxes, registration fees, etc.), federal funding, debt financing, pass through financing, toll equity and public-private partnerships. Many projects are funded through a combination of resources. At the local level, TxDOT, the MPO, local officials and the public evaluate the project and work together to develop a strong proposal. Local transportation professionals, including engineers, planners and environmental specialists, evaluate the project's viability and environmental implications. Different solutions are evaluated and costs are estimated. TxDOT has 12 funding categories to fund various types of projects. Projects fall under the Statewide Preservation and Safety Program (SPSP) and the Statewide Mobility and Supplemental Transportation Program (SMSTP). Federal funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund, a pool of money generated by federal fuel taxes and other related fees from all 50 states and the commonwealths of the United States. Money from the Federal Highway Trust Fund is allocated to TxDOT based on formulas established by federal transportation legislation. The distribution of these federal funds throughout the state is based on criteria and funding formulas approved annually by the Texas Transportation Commission.”

General Comment 10: How do the complementary elements such as growth management, transportation system management and transportation demand management (including the creation of more work/live/play planned communities within the US 281 project corridor that could reduce commuting distances) weigh into each alternative?

General Response 10: Strategies to address congestion in the US 281 project corridor are included in *Mobility 2035*. These strategies are described below and are applicable to all alternatives including the No-Build Alternative.

Growth Management

Growth management refers to local and/or regional policy initiatives that are intended to influence the location and density of residential and commercial land uses in the metropolitan area. *Mobility 2035* has adopted a land use scenario that promotes Transit Oriented

Development and Infill Development in the San Antonio area as a growth management strategy. As part of the infill strategy, this scenario limits growth outside of Loop 1604 in Bexar County and aims at more efficient land uses that reduce trip lengths.

It should be noted that implementation of these planning actions may vary within the US 281 project corridor. This is because a portion of the corridor is located in the City of San Antonio, from Loop 1604 to approximately Marshall Road, and the unincorporated area north of Marshall Road is regulated by Bexar County. Unlike the City of San Antonio, Bexar County does not have the power to regulate zoning on land in the county, or the use or appearance of property.

Transportation System Management (TSM)

TSM refers to easily implementable, low capital cost transportation improvements that increase the efficiency of transportation facilities and services. The US 281 Super Street is an example of TSM. Other examples include improved signal management, access management, ridesharing, and incident management programs.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

TDM typically refers to policies and programs that are directed towards reducing single occupant vehicle travel. TDM can be an effective alternative to increasing capacity of a transportation system. Some examples of TDM include area pricing, alternative work schedules, and parking management.

In addition to the strategies highlighted above, the EIS is considering bus, Park-n-Ride facilities, and bike and pedestrian facilities in combination with each build alternative.

These strategies are analyzed in more detail in the Draft EIS.

General Comment 11: What happened to the original plan TxDOT proposed in 2000? Just build the overpasses.

General Response 11: Without environmental clearance in place, we cannot add new capacity (using federal funds) to US 281. The Alamo RMA's US 281 EIS will help regain environmental clearance for new capacity to be added to US 281, provided the EIS ultimately recommends a build alternative. According to NEPA, the FHWA, TxDOT and the Alamo RMA can only select an alternative that has been studied and disclosed in an approved environmental document, in this case an EIS. This action could allow for overpasses and new lanes to be built - or any other option for new capacity.

Overpasses with entrance/exit ramps and frontage roads were considered as an alternative within the EIS process.

Please see General Response 19 for more information on the previous environmental studies on the US 281.

General Comment 12: Toll roads are grossly overbuilt. We do not need a 20-lane toll road.

General Response 12: The analysis to determine the number of lanes needed throughout a roadway is based on the MPO's traffic model for each alternative. There are currently no locations that propose a 20 lane wide cross-section. As an example, the typical cross-section for Build Alternative 2 (Expressway) is three main lanes both northbound and southbound with two to three lane frontage roads. At various locations in Build Alternative 2, between the

entrance and exit ramps, an additional lane was proposed to provide space for cars to safely merge with thru traffic. The following figure illustrates a section of US 281 in Build Alternative 2. In section A-A, there are a total of 14 lanes, eight are main lanes and six are frontage road lanes. In section B-B, there are again 14 lanes, six main lanes, six frontage road lanes, and two ramp lanes.



Figure 4 - Example of the Number of Lanes on US 281

Where the frontage roads approach a major cross-street, such as Evans Road or Stone Oak Parkway, there would be additional lanes proposed as necessary for U-turn and right turn lanes. The analysis to determine the number of lanes needed to accommodate turning movements has not been completed at this stage of the project.

General Comment 13: Why was the information so general at this meeting? I need more details to decide which are the best options. Why were costs not included in the meeting information? How can we provide feedback if we don't know how much money these alternatives will cost?

General Response 13: The purpose of Public Scoping Meeting #2 was to present and request input on the following aspects of the EIS:

- the objectives that further define the need and purpose for improvements to US 281
- the recommended preliminary range of alternatives
- the recommended method for evaluation and screening the alternatives

Due to the early stage of the EIS in November 2009 when this meeting occurred, the preliminary range of alternatives and method of evaluation and screening for the alternatives were presented at a conceptual level of detail so the US 281 EIS team could gather input before moving farther into the EIS process. Later in the EIS process at the next public meeting on April

29, 2010 more information was presented, such as the results of Level 2 and Level 3 of the alternatives evaluation and screening process, more detailed information on the alternatives including schematics and data including traffic information, speeds, ROW requirements and baseline environmental data was presented to compare each alternative to each other.

Preliminary cost estimates were presented for the build alternatives to the Community Advisory Committee on February 16, 2011, and refined cost estimates will be included in the Draft EIS.

All materials from public meetings and Community Advisory Committee meetings are available on www.411on281.com/US281EIS.

General Comment 14: Why is public transportation being considered, that will not solve the problem on US 281?

General Response 14: As with any project going through the NEPA process, we are required to consider all reasonable alternatives. On US 281, public transit was not found to be a solution to all existing and future safety/traffic congestion problems. However, it does have a place in the community's tool box to provide mobility, and therefore designs have been developed that would not preclude its implementation at a future time, when additional highway widening might not be feasible or cost-effective.

General Comment 15: Questions about the US 281 Super Street, the US 281/Loop 1604 Interchange and the Loop 1604 EIS.

General Response 15:

US 281 Super Street - FHWA has approved the environmental document (a Categorical Exclusion) for proposed operational and safety improvements on US 281 at Encino Rio Road, Evans Road, Stone Oak Parkway and Marshall Road, commonly referred to as the "US 281 Super Street." While not a permanent fix for the congestion on US 281, the Super Street is an interim solution, to provide relief today between Encino Rio Road and Marshall Road, while allowing the work on the US 281 EIS to move forward. Work on the US 281 Super Street started in March 2010 and was completed in fall of 2010. The US 281 Super Street is a separate project from the US 281 EIS; for more information regarding the US 281 Super Street project please visit www.AlamoRMA.com.

US 281/Loop 1604 Interchange - As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), also known as the Federal Stimulus program, the Alamo RMA has received \$140 million in funding to construct four non-toll southern direct connectors between US 281 and Loop 1604 on the north side of San Antonio. In April 2010, the Alamo RMA Board of Directors awarded Williams Brothers Construction Company the Design- Build contract. These four connectors will help provide direct access between these two roadways for approximately 50,000 vehicles a day when construction is finished. The US 281/Loop 1604 Interchange is a separate project from the US 281 EIS. For additional information on this project or to submit a comment, please visit www.AlamoRMA.com.

Loop 1604 EIS - The Loop 1604 EIS will be the most comprehensive environmental study ever conducted on potential improvements to Loop 1604. The study began in 2009 for the portion of Loop 1604 from FM 1957 (Potranco Road) to IH 35 North. Inclusion of the portion of Loop 1604 between US 90 West and Potranco Road (FM 1957) has been added since the first public scoping meetings were held on October 21 and 22, 2009. For more information or to provide comments on this project, please visit www.morefor1604.com.

Each of these projects – the US 281 Super Street, US 281/Loop 1604 Interchange, and Loop 1604 – is a separate project with independent utility. The impacts from each project will be accounted for in the US 281 EIS analysis of indirect and cumulative impacts. The 281 EIS will account for the impacts from the Loop 1604 project that fall within the US 281 resource study areas.

General Comment 16: Why was this meeting format chosen?

General Response 16: The meeting format was an open house, followed by a presentation and a small group exercise. The intent of the meeting format is to provide a free exchange of project views and concerns while accommodating the different ways in which people learn and communicate. The open house format kept everyone informed about the EIS process while allowing attendees to discuss their own comments and questions with a variety of subject matter experts through engaging, two-way dialogues. The presentation provided an explanation for the purpose behind the meeting and all the exhibits on display. After the presentation attendees were broken into small groups to discuss the information presented in the open house and the presentation in more detail. This exercise provided an opportunity for participants to hear and exchange differing viewpoints with each other. Through this format, all attendees had the opportunity to exchange ideas and provide input on the need and purpose for improvements to US 281, and a range of alternatives to address growth, improve safety, improve mobility and enhance quality of life in the US 281 corridor.

In addition, there were numerous ways for attendees to make comments, such as (1) filling out a comment card and dropping it into the comment box; (2) giving comments verbally to a court reporter; (3) submitting comments by fax, email or the project website; and (4) mailing written comments to the Alamo RMA.

In light of the specific goal of Public Scoping Meeting #2, which is to get a broad spectrum of public input to the National Environmental Policy Act scoping process, the format of this meeting has proven to be effective, and produced a useful record for the project.

After this meeting, there was a public meeting in April 2010 and there will be a Public Hearing as part of the US 281 EIS that will occur following the release of the Draft EIS. After the public hearing, there will be a public meeting to identify the preferred alternative.

General Comment 17: Will sound barriers be considered in the US 281 EIS? If so, when?

General Response 17: A traffic noise analysis following the TxDOT Guidelines for Analysis and Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise (April 2011) will be completed along the US 281 corridor in association with the EIS. This analysis will include the determination of the existing traffic noise levels, the prediction of future (in 2035) traffic noise levels and consideration of noise abatement measures (including noise barriers) for areas where a noise impact occurs. This analysis will be conducted using FHWA's Traffic Noise Model.

The noise barriers proposed in the previous US 281 Environmental Assessment (2007) conducted by TxDOT were withdrawn when FHWA decided to withdraw the environmental clearance for that study. Subsequently, FHWA called for the preparation of an EIS for US 281 from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive.

General Comment 18: Tolling public property, such as the US 281 ROW, is illegal.

General Response 18: Texas Transportation Code Section 228.201(a)(4) states that as long as a highway is reconstructed so that the number of non-tolled lanes is greater than or equal to the number of lanes that existed before the toll lanes were added, the project is not considered a conversion of an existing highway to a toll road. Moreover, state law directly prohibits the conversion of an entire, existing road to a toll facility. In other words, the public must have access to the equal number of non-tolled lanes as it had prior to the addition of the tolled capacity. Depending on the location, the current tolled alternatives have 2 or 3 non-tolled lanes in each direction in the corridor. If the US 281 EIS selects a tolled or managed improvement option, there would still need to be at least the same number of non-tolled lanes available to the public as exists today.

While the interpretation and application of this law has been criticized and debated, the Alamo RMA is following the statute as it currently stands in Texas.

General Comment 19: Why have there been so many environmental studies? Why is an EIS necessary? Why does it take so long? When are we going to see some relief?

General Response 19: In recent history, numerous transportation improvements have been completed and proposed along US 281 within the project corridor. These projects have been evaluated under the NEPA through a series of Categorical Exclusions and Environmental Assessments. The environmental documentation history related to these improvements is summarized in the table below.

Table 8. History of US 281 Environmental Documentation

| Highway | Limits | Document Type and Approval* | Approving Authority | Approval Date |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| US 281 | Bitters Road to 2.5 miles north of Loop 1604 (Evans Road) | EA – FONSI | FHWA | August 8, 1984 |
| US 281 | Sonterra Blvd. (0.4 mile north of Loop 1604) to 2.5 miles north of Loop 1604 (Evans Road) | EA Reevaluation – FONSI | FHWA | December 11, 2000 |
| US 281 | At Stone Oak Parkway | CE | FHWA | June 2, 2002 |
| US 281 | At Borgfeld Drive | CE | FHWA | September 5, 2002 |
| US 281 | At Loop 1604 Interchange | CE | FHWA | March 31, 2005 |
| US 281 | Loop 1604 to Marshall Road | EA Reevaluation – FONSI | FHWA | May 24, 2005 (Approval Withdrawn) |
| US 281 | Evans Road to Borgfeld Drive | EA – FONSI | FHWA | November 8, 2005 (Approval Withdrawn) |
| US 281 | Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive | EA – FONSI | FHWA | August 14, 2007 (Approval Withdrawn) |

| Highway | Limits | Document Type and Approval* | Approving Authority | Approval Date |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| US 281 | At Encino Rio Road, Evans Road, Stone Oak Parkway and Marshall Road ("US 281 Super Street") | CE | FHWA | September 29, 2009 |
| US 281 | At Loop 1604 Interchange | CE | FHWA | February 23, 2010 |

*EA – Environmental Assessment, FONSI – Finding of No Significant Impact, CE – Categorical Exclusion

The US 281 (Loop 1604 to Marshall Road) project was let to construction in September 2005. However, a motion for preliminary injunction was filed by Aquifer Guardians in Urban Areas, and People for Efficient Transportation, Inc. (collectively "AGUA") on December 21, 2005 seeking to bar further land clearing and construction on the expansion of US 281 north of Loop 1604 because of inadequate consideration of environmental issues. TxDOT prepared and submitted a letter to FHWA on January 10, 2006 requesting assistance in shaping an appropriate course of action in light of the review of the environmental studies on US 281 projects in northern Bexar County. FHWA reviewed TxDOT's request and concurred that, under 23 CFR § 771.115, TxDOT could proceed with the preparation of a new Environmental Assessment and further concurred with TxDOT's recommendation that a single Environmental Assessment be completed to address the environmental elements and factors for the project in the US 281 corridor from approximately Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive. With FHWA's concurrence in the initiation of a new environmental document and recognition of issues raised by the public, FHWA withdrew prior environmental clearances on both 2005 US 281 Environmental Assessments, identified in the table above, resulting in the cancellation of construction activities along US 281 from Loop 1604 to Marshall Road. FHWA then directed TxDOT to prepare one comprehensive Environmental Assessment for the US 281 project area from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive within Bexar County.

The most recent Environmental Assessment project concluded with FHWA's issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact or environmental clearance to proceed in August, 2007. A Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief was filed in February 2008 by AGUA, and Texans Uniting for Reform and Freedom (TURF) in US District Court for the Western District of Texas, San Antonio Division, against FHWA, TxDOT and the Alamo RMA. In October 2008, FHWA decided to withdraw the environmental clearance following TxDOT's announcement regarding irregularities in the procurement of a scientific services contract and calling into question components of the environmental document. FHWA called for the preparation of an EIS for US 281 from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive. The Alamo RMA assumed responsibility for preparing the EIS. An EIS is required in order to maintain federal funding eligibility for US 281 transportation improvements, including any transit improvements that would be federally funded. In a November 10, 2008 letter from the FHWA Division Administrator to the TxDOT Executive Director, FHWA wrote that "the Federal Highway Administration will require that an EIS is required for any future federal transportation project in the US 281 Corridor."

The EIS process will take approximately four to five years to complete. This timeframe is required in order to give full consideration to the project alternatives, to give the joint lead, cooperating and participating agencies adequate time to review all project information, and to fully engage project stakeholders and the public.

Here are some of the project milestones in the process with approximate dates:

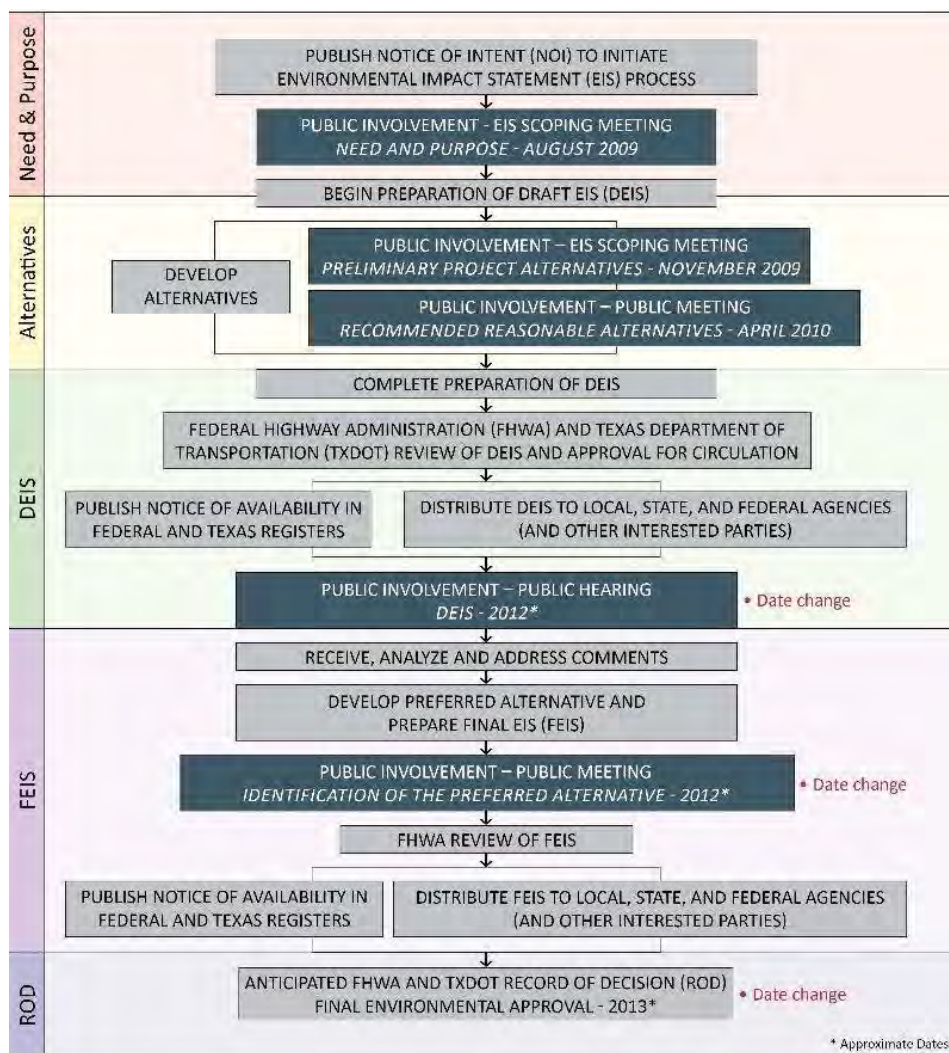


Figure 5 - EIS Process Diagram

If one of the build alternatives is the selected alternative and the record of decision has been issued, and assuming that the funding is available the design and construction along the corridor would take approximately three to four years with an estimated completion date of sometime in 2016-2017.

General Comment 20: A toll road could significantly reduce my property values due to the change and/or reduction in access. Will I have to pay to enter and exit my subdivision?

General Response 20: All build alternatives are being evaluated for both toll and non-toll options and for their potential impact on economic conditions in the EIS. Under the toll option, motorists would not be forced to pay. There would always be a non-tolled alternative route available. The designs are being created so that a set of highway lanes called frontage roads very similar to those on US 281 today, would provide access to and from residences, businesses, cross streets, without paying any tolls. Motorists would have the opportunity to travel the entire length of the corridor via these frontage roads without having to pay. Details regarding travel times on the frontage roads compared to the toll lanes will be provided in the EIS.

General Comment 21: Why do we need all the money up front, why can't we build one overpass at a time as funding is acquired?

General Response 21: Pursuing the US 281 Corridor Project as a purely tax-funded facility could require that improvements be constructed in phases based on the annual availability of tax dollars. According to *Mobility 2035*, one of the possible ways to close the gap in transportation funding is to phase projects; that is, look for ways to construct only critical sections of roadway instead of the ultimate build-out in the near term. However, this approach could delay completion of the eight-mile US 281 Corridor Project indefinitely because of funding limitations. Traditional highway funding on a pay-as-you-go basis would also result in higher construction costs should future phases encounter increases in material and labor costs. When phasing of improvements occurs, each construction phase needs to have operational independence in order to advance separately from the other phases, and project sponsors must demonstrate a reasonable expectation for funding for the whole project, as it appears in the EIS document, through consistency with the State Transportation Improvement Plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, or the Unified Transportation Plan.

General Comment 22: I have concerns about the pedestrian and bicycle facilities planned on US 281. Are they safe on such a congested roadway?

General Response 22: Providing pedestrian and bicycle options is included in each build alternative. Pedestrian access would be provided in accordance with the United States Access Board, *Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way*. For bicyclists, a wide outside lane would be provided along the frontage roads to be used as a shared lane with motorists. In a study conducted by FHWA in 1999, research findings were that a wide outside lane improved riding conditions for bicyclists (Publication No. FHWA-RD-99-034). In addition to the pedestrian sidewalks and the shared lanes for bicyclists, a multi-use path is part of each build alternative. The exact location has not been established, but the multi-use path would provide a pedestrian and bicycle option that would be separated a safe distance from the roadway such that they function as independent facilities. In situations where they would not be able to be adequately separated, a physical barrier would be recommended.

General Comment 23: How is an alternative eliminated from further consideration?

General Comment 23: According to NEPA, the Alamo RMA must consider the full range of reasonable alternatives, defined as those that meet the need and purpose for the project. All reasonable alternatives will remain under consideration until they can be eliminated through the alternatives evaluation and screening process. More information on this process can be found in General Response 2.

5.2. Specific Comment Responses

If a comment was only brought up by one person or was particularly complex in nature it was given a specific response. This is indicated by “Specific Response see **Section 5.2**” located in the **Response #** column of **Table 6**.

Response to Comment 56: Federal law requires that federally funded highway construction projects be competitively bid. The Code of Federal Regulations – Title 23: Highways requires that federal-aid contracts be awarded only on the basis of the lowest responsive bid submitted by a bidder meeting the criteria of responsibility as established by the state transportation department. These requirements apply to all highway construction projects funded under Title 23.

Response to Comment 57:

Comment 1 (Commuter Rail)

Commuter rail is a public transit system that generally shares railroad tracks with freight rail operations. In most instances, commuter rail is attractive if a freight line already exists with sufficient unused capacity to permit the cost-effective implementation of rail passenger service. In such a case, it is not necessary to construct whole new tracks. Another form of passenger rail service is defined as Light Rail Transit (LRT). LRT generally uses its own railroad tracks as it operates throughout the day, while as its name implies, commuter rail typically operates only during peak periods to carry people between where they live and where they work. Generally, commuter rail services are oriented towards longer distance travel than LRT, and as a result, commuter rail cars tend to have two levels to accommodate all passengers in seats. LRT vehicles have all passengers on a single level with wide aisles to accommodate standees and permit rapid entry and exit at stations. Here in Texas, LRT is successfully operated in Dallas/Fort Worth and Houston, while commuter rail service is provided in Dallas/Fort Worth and Austin. Nationally, there are many applications of both technologies.

Commuter rail was eliminated during the first level screening of the alternatives analysis because there are no freight lines in the US 281 study area (Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive) that passenger trains could use. If passenger services become critical at some point in time, rail lines would have to be constructed. A rail system that would accommodate LRT would “fit” into the suburban setting of the corridor better because 1) it tends to pollute less because it generally is powered by electricity, 2) it provides more continuous service than diesel powered commuter rail, and 3) it would match the services currently proposed by San Antonio’s transit provider VIA in the Central Business District.

Comment 2a, 2b and 2c (Commuter Rail)

LRT, and its sibling technology called Streetcar, was further explored in the second level of alternatives analyses. A key consideration was how the eight-mile segment of an LRT serving the US 281 corridor north of Loop 1604 could tie into VIA’s plans for similar services in the downtown area in order to create a more attractive and efficient service. The most logical solution would be to tie the two segments together near the San Antonio airport. Three separate routes were considered for this connection, including along the frontage road system of US 281 south of Loop 1604, along Blanco Road, and along the Union Pacific Railroad ROW. The cost for these connections was estimated to vary between \$400 million and \$1.35 Billion. Coupled with the fact that population and employment markets further out from San Antonio’s core are much less conducive to

LRT/Streetcar services, the less cost effective such strategies appear within the current planning horizon (year 2035). It should be noted that the growth policies adopted by the MPO do not anticipate or desire high density land development patterns in the US 281 project corridor that would support the need for such an investment during this period.

These matters were discussed with VIA, the local transit provider. Not only was this necessary to ensure proper transportation planning in the EIS, but it is also necessary because one of the objectives of the US 281 EIS is to encourage the development of facilities for multi-modal transportation because as the comment rightly points out it is not possible or even desirable to continue to focus all solutions on the single occupant vehicle. However, at a coordination meeting with VIA a recommendation was made to provide the opportunity for future expansion of LRT/Streetcar within the US 281 project corridor by maintaining space for such construction in a future year while pursuing more near term transit solutions using express buses and a park-and-ride lot north of Loop 1604. These near term solutions will be incorporated into all of the build alternatives analyzed in the EIS.

Comment 3 (New Parallel Corridor)

The expansion of both Blanco and Bulverde Roads was considered in Level 2 and Level 3 of the alternatives evaluation and screening process. Since the long range plan already includes the widening of each of these facilities to at least a four lane cross-section (and is therefore included in the “No-Build” condition), a scenario was created whereby Blanco and Bulverde Roads would both be expanded to six-lanes throughout the EIS study area. It was “bundled” together with the strategy of creating overpasses for major intersections along US 281 as well as the widening of portions of the highway to provide a continuous six-lane facility.

At the end of the Level 3 alternatives evaluation and screening process, recommendations were made to eliminate this alternative from further study. These recommendations were based on the following facts:

- Adverse impact to Camp Bullis operations (light intrusion and land development)
- Additional 70 acres of ROW required
- Potential for more than 30 residential displacements
- High potential for adverse environmental impacts (Edwards Aquifer, wildlife habitat, etc)

After a preliminary review, the New Parallel Corridor was eliminated in Level 1. If we built a simple arterial over the eight-mile study area, that would require about 150 acres of land, and assuming an average density of two dwelling units per acre out there now, that would suggest a need to displace as much as 300 residences, not to mention the adverse impact on the aquifer and natural habitat. If a new freeway were to be considered, the impact would be approximately three times as high. Given that there are no “open” corridors in the study area, this alternative was previously recommended for elimination, and there has been substantial public support for that conclusion.

Additional Comments

All of the ideas mentioned in the comment have been included in the build alternatives being analyzed in the EIS, including adding a park-n-ride site and facilitating fast and efficient movements of carpools, vanpools and buses. A multi-use path for bicycles and pedestrians has also been incorporated into the build alternatives being considered in

the Draft EIS. Other Transportation System Management and Transportation Demand Management strategies would be incorporated in concert with *Mobility 2035*. Several of the alternatives being evaluated specifically address the point that US 281 has both regional and community functions by including main lanes for longer distance traffic as well as frontage roads to serve access to adjacent land developments.

The following strategies are part of all alternatives being considered in the EIS:

Growth Management

Growth management refers to local and/or regional policy initiatives that are intended to manage growth in the metropolitan area. *Mobility 2035* has adopted a land use scenario that promotes Transit Oriented Development and Infill Development in the San Antonio area as a growth management strategy. As part of the infill strategy, this scenario limits growth outside of Loop 1604 in Bexar County and aims at more efficient land uses that reduce trip lengths. This strategy seeks better control over land use to discourage urban sprawl and promote higher density levels and mixed use development to encourage travel by walking, bicycling and transit.

Transportation System Management (TSM)

TSM refers to easily implementable, low capital cost transportation improvements that increase the efficiency of transportation facilities and services. The US 281 Super Street is an example of TSM. Other examples include improved signal management, access management, ridesharing, and incident management programs. TSM includes techniques to optimize capacity and improve safety and reliability of the roadway system. For example, Incident Management focuses on clearing incidents, crashes and major events to allow traffic flow to resume.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

TDM typically refers to policies and programs that are directed towards reducing single occupant vehicle travel. TDM can be an effective alternative to increasing capacity of a transportation system. Some examples of TDM include area pricing, alternative work schedules, and parking management. The Alamo Area Council of Governments' "Commute Solutions Program" and "River Cities Rideshare" Program, and the SA-BC MPO's Walkable Community Program lead these efforts.

In addition to the strategies highlighted above, the EIS is considering bus, park-n-ride facilities, and bike and pedestrian facilities in combination with each build alternative.

1. Comment noted.
2. Comment noted and considered. Ride sharing is one of the Congestion Management Process (CMP) projects included in the SA-BC MPO's long range planning initiatives to manage congestion in the US 281 project corridor. These CMP projects are included in all alternatives being considered in the EIS.
3. Comment noted.
4. Comment noted.
5. Comment noted.

6. Comment noted. The expansion of both Blanco and Bulverde Roads was considered in Level 2 and Level 3 of the alternatives evaluation and screening process.

7. Comment noted. The Build Alternatives being considered in the EIS incorporate access roads into the design.

8. Comment noted. The options for access control are either to purchase the access rights along US 281, construct a frontage road system along the length of the facility to control where traffic enters and exits US 281, or some combination of the two. Each parcel of land has value related to many factors – one of which is access. In 2010 there were 115 driveways along US 281 between Sonterra Boulevard and Borgfeld Drive as well as 11 at-grade intersections with cross streets. Strict access control would require negotiations with each property owner to compensate for the value of that access. Some cost may be minimized by providing frontage or backage roads, but additional costs would be associated with the construction of such facilities. Access management is one of the CMP projects included in the SA-BC MPO's long range planning initiatives to manage congestion in the US 281 project corridor. These CMP projects are included in all alternatives being considered in the EIS.

9. Comment noted. Improvements for US 281 from Loop 1604 north to Borgfeld Drive are included in the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (SA-BC MPO) *Mobility 2035*, which is the region's long-range, multi-modal, metropolitan transportation plan (MTP). The MTP also provides for the improvement of other roadways – such as Loop 1604, Blanco Road, and Bulverde Road – that are in the vicinity of the planned US 281 improvements. Expansion of US 281 north of Borgfeld Drive is included in the Comal County Major Thoroughfare Plan, which calls for US 281 to be upgraded to a controlled access freeway to the Guadalupe River.

The proposed action has the logical termini of Loop 1604 on the south and Borgfeld Drive on the north, which provide rational end points for transportation improvements and review of environmental impacts. North of Borgfeld Drive, the next two major intersections with US 281 – FM 1863 and SH 46, respectively – are each already grade-separated interchanges. South of Borgfeld Drive, grade-separated interchanges occur at Sonterra Boulevard and Loop 1604 and continue south as part of the existing US 281 freeway. From Borgfeld Drive south to Redland Road, intersections are currently controlled by traffic signals and signs, a condition that for many years has given rise to calls to be improved with overpasses or grade-separated interchanges, along with direct ramp connections between US 281 and Loop 1604.

The proposed action has independent utility without the benefits of the implementation of other transportation improvements. The project improvements would function as a usable roadway, would not require implementation of any other projects to operate, and would not restrict consideration of alternatives for other foreseeable transportation improvements.

10. Comment noted.

11. Comment noted. One of the alternatives considered involves construction of grade separations at each major cross street and the creation of a continuous six-lane highway throughout the length of the study area. It might be cheaper than full expressway options (which might or might not be tolled). The uncertainty of cost for this alternative is related to how access control would be achieved between the overpasses. If access is not controlled, driveways would likely multiply along US 281 as additional growth occurs, and some of these driveways may become signalized. Such actions would reduce or eliminate the effectiveness of the overpasses at existing cross-streets.

12. Roundabouts have many advantages that are just starting to gain attention here in the United States. Besides providing opportunities to create a more aesthetically pleasing environment, roundabouts can make travel through at-grade intersections more efficient by minimizing delay. Roundabouts can also reduce vehicle speeds through neighborhoods. Typically, such a solution is useful when volumes are roughly equal on crossing streets/highways, and traffic speeds are not as high as those intended on US 281. However, concerning this portion of US 281, roundabouts would not provide an acceptable solution because the volumes on the cross streets are not nearly equivalent to the high speed movements on US 281. As a result, vehicles waiting on the side street to enter the traffic circle would be unable to do so safely because of the high and continuous volumes on the main street. In fact, the current peak hour volumes on US 281 exceed the possible capacity of large, multi-lane roundabouts (see Exhibit 4-6 on page 89 of *Roundabouts: An Informational Guide*, published by the U.S. Department of Transportation). With US 281 traffic volumes likely to increase substantially in the future, roundabouts would be even less desirable.

In a much broader point, whether roundabouts or traffic signals are used to control traffic movements at critical intersections of US 281, there are too many conflicts between through and turning traffic. This creates congestion and safety problems. These problems can best be addressed by separating/minimizing as many of the conflicts as possible. The US 281 Super Street approach attempts to do this in the most cost-effective manner, but its proponents acknowledge that the growth in traffic would eventually overwhelm its capacities. Ultimately, using grade separated interchanges will be necessary to address traffic concerns.

13. Comment noted. People making longer distance trips are generally more likely to use high occupancy vehicle (HOV) or high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes. However, removing HOV/HOT vehicles from the lanes used by others does provide for a reduction in congestion within the non-HOV/HOT lanes. HOV/HOT lanes would be designed to accommodate as many movements as possible.

Response to Comment 64: As you noted, the US 281 Super Street is a separate project from the US 281 EIS; please direct questions and comments regarding the US 281 Super Street website located at www.AlamoRMA.com.

The number of cars driving on US 281 during rush hour or peak traffic times overwhelms the function of the traffic signals and repeated efforts to re-time or re-synchronize the signals have not been able to appreciably improve travel speeds or reduce delays. However, one of the benefits of the Alamo RMA's US 281 Super Street is that it has improved traffic flow by reducing travel times during peak periods between Loop 1604 and Marshall Road. Instead of waiting

through multiple traffic signals to turn left, drivers are able to turn right, enter a protected U-turn lane, and when the main lane traffic is stopped, they can make a left hand turn to get moving. This interim solution will help provide relief from traffic congestion today, and give the Alamo RMA time to complete the EIS to identify and provide long-term solutions to the congestion within this US 281 corridor.

The implementation of the US 281 Super Street configuration does not allow for the lengthening of the left turn bays. It does however have dual left turn lanes for both northbound and southbound traffic, allowing for more vehicle storage capacity. Furthermore, the alternatives being considered in the Draft EIS propose separating the through traffic from local traffic thereby resolving this issue.

A left turn into HEB/Jack in the Box near Evans Road is no longer feasible with the US 281 Super Street in place; however the dual left turn bays at the intersection of Evans Road and US 281 do provide improved traffic flow onto Evans Road and into the HEB center.

Response to Comment 66: Each build alternative being considered in the Draft EIS provides an increase to the level of service (LOS) for the segment of US 281 near Encino Road. LOS measures the quality of travel experienced by users and is categorized based on the amount and length of congested conditions. An increase to the LOS is going to reduce delays for traffic exiting and entering the Encino Park Subdivision. While the US 281 EIS does not propose any direct improvements to Encino Road itself, with the improvements made to the intersection of Encino Road and US 281, access would be improved.

In response to public comments, all build alternatives are being considered for both non-toll and toll lane options.

Response to Comment 78: Consideration for congestion relief and potential functional requirements for upgrading US 281 to a controlled access roadway are reflected in the need and purpose for the US 281. As was presented at Public Scoping Meeting #2, all improvements for US 281 will:

Address Growth

- Satisfy travel demand
- Be consistent with local and regional plans and policies
- Develop facilities for multi-modal transportation
- Allow for future high capacity transit

Improve Functionality

- Reduce travel time and increase travel speeds
- Reduce conflicts between local and through traffic
- Improve access to adjacent property

Improve Safety

- Reduce accident rates

Improve Quality of Life

- Avoid/minimize adverse social & economic impacts
- Avoid/minimize water quality impacts
- Avoid/minimize impacts to wildlife habitat
- Enhance air quality
- Minimize noise impacts
- Maximize use of non-toll funds
- Provide for aesthetics and landscaping
- Provide facilities for walking & biking

While the original plan to expand US 281 north of Loop 1604 relied upon traditional gas tax revenue, the amount of money to adequately fund the project was never dedicated to the project

due to competing highway funding priorities. This was due in large part to decreasing revenues, federal funding rescissions, and growing maintenance costs for existing highways. Under the current US 281 EIS any alternative can be studied. The selected alternative in the EIS Record of Decision must be consistent with the Transportation Improvement Program and *Mobility 2035*. The MPO's recently adopted *Mobility 2035* outlines the following key funding considerations:

- Highway funding from traditional sources over the next 25 years will decrease from \$4.1 billion under the old *Mobility 2030* to \$1.8 billion in the new *Mobility 2035*.
- Federal and state roadway funding will only account for 15 percent of total funding. In *Mobility 2030*, these sources represented 39 percent of total transportation funding required for projects in the plan.

The *Mobility 2035* places even greater reliance on private funds, which are estimated to account for nearly \$4.0 billion of program costs in the current plan, up from the \$1.5 billion of program costs in the 2030 Mobility Plan.

Annual financial statements for the Alamo RMA are available on its website at <http://www.alamorma.org>. The mission of the Alamo RMA is also identified on its website and is as follows: "To provide our customers with a rapid and reliable alternative for the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services."

The US 281 EIS will assess the consistency of the build alternatives with how the project is identified in *Mobility 2035* including funding consistency. *Mobility 2035* identified \$112.2 million from the Texas Mobility Fund (TMF) and \$30 million from the City of San Antonio for the US 281 project (October 2011 update of *Mobility 2035*). Based on the build alternatives under consideration, the cost for the US 281 Corridor Project would exceed the funds contributed from TMF and the City of San Antonio. Based on SA-BC MPO policies and anticipated transportation funding shortfalls, the US 281 project corridor improvements are programmed to be funded and built primarily as a toll facility. The US 281 Corridor Project is included in *Mobility 2035* as a tollway to be constructed primarily with funding leveraged by toll revenue; the four direct connectors that comprise the northern half of the US 281 interchange with Loop 1604 are non-toll. Pursuing the US 281 Corridor Project as a purely tax-funded facility could require that improvements be constructed in phases based on the annual availability of tax dollars. According to *Mobility 2035*, one of the possible ways to close the gap in transportation funding is to phase projects; that is, look for ways to construct only critical sections of roadway instead of the ultimate build-out in the near term. However, this approach could delay completion of the eight-mile US 281 Corridor Project indefinitely because of funding limitations. Traditional highway funding on a pay-as-you-go basis would also result in higher construction costs should future phases encounter increases in material and labor costs. Future updates of *Mobility 2035*, or future MTPs, may result in a change in project funding for the US 281 Corridor Project. Project alternatives in this Draft EIS are therefore analyzed under both toll and non-toll scenarios.

Upgrades to US 281 would have to conform with Texas Transportation Code Section 228.201(a)(4). This section requires that any highway that includes new toll lanes be reconstructed so that the number of non-tolled lanes is greater than or equal to the number that existed before the toll lanes were added. The US 281 Corridor Project would not be considered a conversion of a highway. Additionally, the Resolution by Bexar County Commissioners Court

creating the Alamo RMA on August 12, 2003 expressly states that the Alamo RMA cannot convert existing highway lanes in Bexar County to toll facilities.

As part of a bond document, the Alamo RMA may enter into a non-compete agreement but it would only be binding on the Alamo RMA, as the issuer of debt. Any such agreement would not limit the ability of any other governmental entity from developing, building, maintaining or expanding roadways near and adjacent to an Alamo RMA facility. The non-compete agreement reference in question has been applied to private concession projects and there are no potential toll projects for private concessions authorized within Bexar County at this time.

On October 15, 2009 the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) responded to specific questions from the MPO's Transportation Policy Board on the issue of earlier possible cost estimates for US 281. In its response the TAC noted that there are no engineering reports that support a cost for improvements to US 281 of \$200 million or less. Additionally, the TAC noted that the Alamo RMA provided engineering estimates for the toll projects on US 281 and Loop 1604 and that those estimates are based on 2009 construction costs as developed by the Alamo RMA's Engineer. Additionally, the Alamo RMA costs represent total project costs that include construction, environmental, preliminary engineering, contingencies, construction management, and ROW acquisition. Information related to the TAC meeting may be found at http://www.sametroplan.org/Committees/TPB/Archives/FY2010/Oct26_2009/TPB_Package.pdf

As was previously noted, current funding planned for improvement to US 281 between Loop 1604 and Borgfield Drive are identified in *Mobility 2035* adopted on January 21, 2010. The plan identifies \$112.2 million in Texas Mobility Funds and \$30 million from the City of San Antonio for US 281 (October 2011 update of *Mobility 2035*). As previously noted, this funding alone is anticipated to be well below the total costs required for the long-term improvements to US 281 necessary to address the need and purpose identified for the project. The Alamo RMA must work with the MPO, the Texas Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration and other entities to establish the opportunities for funding the preferred alternative (once it has been identified).

The most recent EA project concluded with FHWA's issuance of a FONSI in August, 2007. A Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief was filed in February 2008 by Aquifer Guardians in Urban Areas (AGUA) and Texans Uniting for Reform and Freedom (TURF) in the US District Court for the Western District of Texas, San Antonio Division, against FHWA, TxDOT and the Alamo RMA. In October 2008, FHWA decided to withdraw the finding of no significant impact (FONSI) following TxDOT's announcement regarding irregularities in the procurement of a scientific services contract, which called into question components of the environmental document. FHWA called for the preparation of an EIS for US 281 from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive, and assigned the responsibility of preparing the EIS to the Alamo RMA. The 2008 lawsuit was administratively closed by the Court on February 5, 2009.

H.R. 3074, the FY 2008 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill was effective through September 30, 2008 and later extended to September 30, 2009. Additionally, the amendment was not applicable to new lanes or capacity as was explained in a press release issued on September 12, 2007:

"Efforts to toll newly constructed lanes or new highways would not be prohibited in H.R. 3074 that passed the Senate, or in S. 2019 or H.R. 3510.

'I've long believed that if local communities and the state want to come together and build a toll road, they should be able to do it,' Sen. Hutchison said." <http://www.kten.com/story/7064841/us-senate-passes-hutchison-amendment-to-ban-tolling-existing-tx-highways?clienttype=printable>

While H.R. 3074 has expired, the basic condition of this amendment remains the policy of the Alamo RMA and the TxDOT and are contained in state statute.

Current traffic projections for the US 281 corridor are consistent with the land use plans and regional travel demand model prepared by the MPO and used in the *Mobility 2035*. Under a No-Build scenario, US 281 would accommodate between 80,000 vehicles per day (vpd) in the northern section (near Bulverde Road) and 125,000 vpd in the southern section (near Sonterra Blvd.) in 2035. If US 281 was improved with non-tolled, tolled or managed lanes it would accommodate between 130,000 and 205,000 vpd in 2035. Additional traffic being served by US 281 under the alternative scenarios is not attributable to new growth generated by the alternatives themselves, but represents traffic being carried on US 281 that would otherwise have to divert to alternative roadways due to higher congestion levels and delay on US 281.

FHWA requires the EIS for US 281 to be completed in a manner to address concerns related to the complex natural and human environment that co-exists in this area before an alternative can be selected. The EIS process requires the Alamo RMA to consider all reasonable alternatives that meet need and purpose along US 281 from Loop 1604 to Borgfeld Drive. Traffic impacts (both operational and safety-related) for any recommended alternative will be addressed through the EIS process. Additionally, to the extent that tolling or other user fees must be evaluated as a funding option for a recommended alternative, the related social and environmental factors must be addressed as part of the EIS process. Similarly, operational factors as they relate to commercial trucks and emergency vehicles will be addressed for a recommended alternative through the EIS.

For the US 281 EIS, the Alamo RMA has prepared a Draft Coordination Plan in accordance with Public Law 109-59, SAFETEA-LU, Section 6002. It is available on the RMA's US 281 project website at: www.411on281.com/us281EIS/. The plan provides a list of lead, joint-lead, cooperating and participating agencies and summarizes the activities and anticipated schedule for key coordination points. As was previously noted, the EIS process requires the Alamo RMA to consider all reasonable alternatives along US 281. The EIS being undertaken by the Alamo RMA must comply with all provisions of NEPA as well all other applicable federal and state legal requirements. NEPA requires that all components of the decision-making process be documented and maintained for public review as appropriate under the Freedom of Information Act. Furthermore, the Alamo RMA and the Texas Department of Transportation comply with the statutory requirements of the Open Records Law of the State of Texas as codified in Section 552 of the Government Code.

Response to Comment 80: The US 281 and Loop 1604 projects are separate projects, each having independent utility and a unique purpose.

Single EIS for US 281 and Loop 1604. The US 281 EIS has the logical termini of Loop 1604 on the south and Borgfeld Drive on the north, which provide rational end points for transportation improvements and review of environmental impacts. (Construction of the proposed improvements would extend north of Borgfeld Drive to approximately to tie the improvements back to the existing US 281 lanes.) The proposed action has independent utility without the benefits of the implementation of other programmed transportation improvements like Loop 1604. The project improvements would function as a usable roadway, would not require

implementation of other projects to operate, and would not restrict consideration of alternatives for other foreseeable transportation improvements. The US 281 project is approximately eight miles in length and provides radial mobility in North Bexar County. By contrast, the Loop 1604 project is approximately 35.5 miles in length and provides circumferential mobility in Central/Northwest Bexar County.

Purpose and Need. The need for improvements to the US 281 project corridor arises from historic and continuing trends in population and employment growth along the corridor and within the surrounding areas. This growth generates increasing amounts of vehicle travel, which in turn impedes the function of US 281 to provide regional mobility and local access, leading to lengthy travel delays and a high rate of vehicle crashes. These transportation issues negatively affect the quality of life for communities surrounding the US 281 project corridor. The purpose of the US 281 Corridor Project is to improve mobility and accessibility, improve safety, and enhance community quality of life. The EIS considers a wide range of alternatives for addressing the need for and purpose of the project. By contrast, the purpose for Loop 1604 is to improve safety and to enhance mobility and operational efficiency.

Travel Demand Strategies. A range of Congestion Management Process (CMP) projects aimed at improving air quality is included in the Build Alternatives. These CMP projects (already adopted in *Mobility 2035*) include TDM, TSM, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)/Advanced Transportation Management (ATM), transit, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Examples of the SA-BC MPO's long range planning initiatives to manage congestion in CMP corridors such as the US 281 project corridor include: 1) Operational Management (i.e., TSM) – techniques to optimize capacity and improve safety and reliability of the roadway system. For example, Incident Management focuses on clearing incidents, crashes and major events to allow traffic flow to resume. 2) Community Campaigns (i.e., TDM) – strategies to reduce automobile use and congestion. The Alamo Area Council of Governments' "Commute Solutions Program" and "River Cities Rideshare" Program, and the SA-BC MPO's Walkable Community Program lead these efforts. 3) Growth Management/Land Use – better control over land use to discourage urban sprawl and promote higher density levels and mixed use development to encourage travel by walking, bicycling and transit. 4) Access Management – controlling the number and placement of access points such as driveways. In addition, the Build Alternatives include an envelope within the right-of-way for future transportation improvements such as high capacity transit.

Cooperating Agencies. The list of lead, joint-lead, cooperating and participating agencies is provided in the table below.

Table 9. US 281 EIS Cooperating and Participating Agencies

| Agency Name | Role |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Federal Highway Administration | Lead Agency |
| Texas Department of Transportation | Joint Lead Agency |
| Alamo Regional Mobility Authority | Joint Lead Agency |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | Cooperating Agency; Participating Agency |
| U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service | Cooperating Agency; Participating Agency |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency | Cooperating Agency; Participating Agency |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Cooperating Agency; Participating Agency |
| Various Tribal Governments | Participating Agency |
| Camp Bullis | Participating Agency |

| Agency Name | Role |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Texas Historical Commission | Cooperating Agency; Participating Agency |
| Texas Parks and Wildlife Department | Participating Agency |
| Texas Commission on Environmental Quality | Participating Agency |
| Town of Hollywood Park | Participating Agency |
| Bexar County | Participating Agency |
| City of San Antonio | Participating Agency |
| Comal County | Participating Agency |
| City of Bulverde | Participating Agency |
| Edwards Aquifer Authority | Participating Agency |
| San Antonio Water System | Participating Agency |
| San Antonio River Authority | Participating Agency |
| San Antonio – Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization | Participating Agency |
| VIA Metropolitan Transit | Participating Agency |
| Alamo Area Council of Governments | Participating Agency |
| Alamo Area Rural Planning Organization | Participating Agency |
| Bexar Metropolitan Water District | Participating Agency |

Response to Comment 126: The meeting format was an open house, followed by a presentation and a small group work session. The format for the small group work session was a structured approach intended to explore a difficult and complex issue by using a series of focused questions. The small group work sessions were broken into two exercises: the first exercise focused on the recommended objectives for improvements to US 281, and the second exercise focused on preliminary alternatives being considered for the US 281. This exercise began by asking the participants individually to relate the recommended objective to the proposed purpose for improvements to US 281. The group discussed their different perspectives on the need and purpose for improvements, the recommended objectives and the preliminary alternatives. After each small group had completed Part 1 and Part 2 of the work session, a volunteer shared the highlights of their small group's discussion with all meeting participants. So participants of this exercise were not only able to hear the different perspectives of their small group, but also the perspectives of the other small groups.

In 2008, the vehicles per day (vpd) on US 281 ranged from 40,000 in the northern section to 80,000 in the southern section. If US 281 was improved with non-tolled, tolled or managed lanes, it would accommodate between 130,000 and 205,000 vpd in 2035. If no improvements were made to US 281, 80,000 vpd would travel in the northern section to 125,000 vpd would travel in the southern section in 2035. The decision on how to finance, build and operate an improvement of US 281 as either a non-toll, toll or managed facility will be a locally driven decision that will be a function of the available funding and if additional toll revenue is required to successfully fund the project.

Public private partnerships (PPP's) are not illegal in the State of Texas. The State of Texas has limited some forms of PPP's, such as Comprehensive Development Agreement (CDA's) where TxDOT and RMA's cannot implement CDA's without enabling legislation. Nevertheless, legislation has been passed in Texas that enables a number of CDA's that are currently underway throughout the state. In 2011, the state legislature passed additional legislation that was signed into law that enables ten additional CDA's in Texas. Additionally, other forms of

PPP's and even CDA's are legal in Texas and can be implemented by other government entities (such as tolling authorities and RMA's).

The Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer, in corporation with others, function as a focal point for the distribution of Census information for Texas. The Center also disseminates population estimates and projections for Texas, as well as other information from the federal government, state government and other sources. For more information, please visit <http://txsdc.utsa.edu/>.

Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) provides general technical assistance to member governments in their planning functions, preparation of applications, and the administration of area-wide programs. In addition, program specific technical assistance for regional planning in the areas of aging services, economic development, 9-1-1 systems, homeland security, criminal justice, resource recovery, air quality, transportation, weatherization, and workforce development is also offered. They also administer the Alamo Local Authority for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. In addition, AACOG sponsors special projects in response to local government needs or requests. Support for these activities is provided through local dues, state appropriations, state and federal grants that are matched by local monies, and other public and private funds. For more information please visit www.aacog.com.

An Early Action Compact requires communities to develop and implement air pollution control strategies; account for emissions growth, and; achieve and maintain the 1997 national 8-hour ozone standard. As of December 2010, San Antonio – Bexar County is in attainment for all of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. However, in 2008, the EPA lowered the eight-hour ozone standard to 0.075 parts per million. The following year, the EPA, announced it was reconsidering the 2008 Ozone standard and, in January 2010, proposed to lower the primary ozone standard to a range of 0.060–0.070 ppm. In evaluating the proposed new standard, the EPA extended the implementation of the 2008 eight-hour ozone standard. On December 8, 2010, EPA requested more input from the Agency's science advisors before selecting final ozone standards and would issue a decision by July 29, 2011. Upon enactment of the new standard, Bexar County could be designated nonattainment for the eight-hour ozone standard. For more information, please visit www.epa.gov/air/eac/index.html.

Response to Comment 127: Yes, any drainage that enters the US 281 corridor from off-site locations would be treated in accordance with the City of San Antonio requirements. In addition, the project is located in the Edwards Aquifer Recharge zone, thus the Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ) requirements would be followed.

Individual private property sewage and storm water management not associated with the proposed action or a transportation facility is not the responsibility of the transportation agencies. For more information on the TCEQ On-site Sewage Facility Program call 512-239-3799 or visit www.tceq.gov.

6.0 NEXT STEPS

6.1. Meeting Report Posting and Notification of Comments Receiving a Response

The Alamo RMA will, once the meeting report is approved, post the meeting report on the website developed for the exchange of information with the community on US 281 improvements, specifically, www.411on281.com.

The Alamo RMA will, once the meeting report is approved, provide notice to all individuals who submitted a comment and supplied contact information. A notice will be sent in the similar medium as the comment was received describing that their comment has been addressed within the meeting report. At this time, the Meeting Report will be available on the project website at www.411on281.com, available for public review in hard copy form at the Alamo RMA offices and at public library locations along the US 281 corridor.